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W. B. Trask

Dorchester

2. Parents should be careful what opinions they embrace. For oftentimes the poison of a corrupt opinion in the Father proveth baneful to the Child; As Naamans Leprosy went down from Generation to Generation, so the plague of spiritual Leprosy in the Head, is sometimes propagated from the Father to the Son.

3. Parents should be careful of their conversation; because their Children are apt to follow their Example, especially in that which is evil. As it's noted of Ahaziah, that he walked in the way of his Father and of his Mother, 1 King. 22, 52. And of those superstitious persons, 2 King. 17, 41. *They served their graven Images, both their Children, and their Childrens Children; as did their Fathers, so do they, to this day.* If the Father follow superstitious or prophane practices, it is most likely that the Children will do so too; Therefore you that are Parents, in the fear of God look to it, that you do not scandalize your Children by an evil Example; If your Children see you in drink sometimes, will not they be drunkards too? If they hear you swear, will not they swear also? if they see you careless in the observation of the Sabbath, will not they likewise be guilty of [illegible] breaking? And if they see you live in the [illegible] holy duties, no prayer in the Family, how [illegible] be seeker of God? It will be a wonder if such Children do not prove Athiests, that are brought up in Familyes, where they never see any prayer, or acknowledgement of God. O think with your selves, if you that are Parents should any of you perish, and your miserable Children follow you to hell, [illegible] will they curse you there? If thy Children perish through thy evil Example, they will follow thee [illegible] and down in the ever burning Lake, crying out, [illegible] Woe to us, that ever we were born of such

[illegible]

that had no grace to teach us the wayes of God, and lead us in the paths of godlineſs; If you that were our Parents, had diſcharged your duty towards us, we might have been in the Joyes of Heaven, but now our damned Souls muſt live for ever in theſe everlaſting flames; Thus wilt thou hear thine own Children yelling in thine Ears, world without end; Canſt thou think of this, and thy heart not break? then thy heart is an Adamant, and thy heart ſtrings made of Iron ſinews.

ISE. 4. Of Exhortation,

1. Let godly parents that are here before the Lord this day, ſuffer the word of Exhortation, *Doe you endeavour to the utmoſt of your power, that your children may become ſeekers and ſervants of the only true God in Jeſus Chriſt.* And indeed when you preſent them to the Lord in Baptiſm, you promiſe to doe your utmoſt, that they may become faithfull Servants of that God who is Father, Son and Spirit; take heed that you doe not become guilty of violating [illegible] in [illegible]ment. God hath committed Children unto [illegible] that ſo you might bring them up for him, [illegible] *which thou haſt borne unto me*, Ezek. 16. [illegible] had the children of a Prince or great man [illegible]mitted to his care and charge for education, would he not be carefull about that [illegible]atter? It is a ſolemn thing, which it may be [illegible] have not duly conſidered, that the great God [illegible] entruſted you with thoſe that are his children, [illegible]at ſo you may nurſe them up for him: O then bring them [illegible] in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is not enough for Parents to ſerve the Lord themſelves, but they muſt uſe utmoſt endeavours that after they are dead, their children may walk in [illegible] wayes of God. And if they be duly carefull in [illegible]ter, they have reaſon to expect, that G[illegible]

will remember and establish his covenant with their Children. For it is noted concerning Abraham, that his care was that his Family *after him* (viz. after he should cease to be in the world) might *keep the way of the Lord*, and so did the Lord bring upon him the thing which he had spoken, and graciously promised with respect to Abrahams posterity. And in special you that are mothers have a great advantage put into your hands, to be instilling [g] good principles into your childrens souls betimes; Solomons mother taught him: we doe not read that Absaloms and Adonijahs mother taught them, as Bathsheba did her son Solomon. And it is not for nothing, that when children have proved thus or so, particular notice is taken in Scripture, that such or such were their mothers: Rehoboam did not prove well, and it is noted that his mother was an Ammonitess. On the other hand, Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat, Josiah were eminent Servants of God, and the Scripture doth mention who were their mothers. O then you that are mothers should endeavour that your Children (as *Luther* speaketh) may suck in Religion from their mothers breasts.

[g] *See Mr. Flavels Practical Christian.*

And let all godly parents *earnestly seek unto the Lord for their poor children*: You ought to doe so daily and particularly, and by name before the Lord and thus [illegible] you doe every day? as we read concerning Job that he offered burnt offerings for his Children, *according to the number of them all, thus did Job continually*. Job. 1. 5. Remember that you are under peculiar encouragement so to doe: if the children of godly parents have special encouragement to seek the Lord, then the same thing must needs be true concerning such parents themselves with respect to their Children. And it is even true with respect to the children of New-

inasmuch as they are the posterity of such as have been sufferers on the account of the name and truth of the Lord Jesus. Are not such parents pronounced blessed twice over? Mat. 5. 11, 12. even blessed in themselves, and in their posterity? Who knoweth but God may remember the kindness of the fathers in these Churches (who followed him into this wilderness whilst it was a land not sown) unto their children after them? Plead it with the Lord; if you that be godly parents lay up a stock of prayers for your children, it may stand them in more stead then if you should leave them never such an inheritance, as to the things of the world, when you are dead your prayers shall live. There is many a child whose father and mother is now in heaven, that fareth the better, and will doe so for ever, on the account of prayers made for him by his blessed parents while they were in this world. And this further let me say for your encouragement, that if the Lord stir up your hearts to be importunate with him, for your children, it is a sign that God intends mercy to them. That instance of *Monica*, Austins gracious mother is known and famous; when she made her complaint and wept to a faithfull Minister because her son did for the present follow ungodly courses and Companions; [b] *Be of good [illegible]* (said that holy man) *for it [illegible] be that a Child of so many prayers [illegible] should perish.*

[b] *vade a me (inquit) i-[illegible]vivat. Fieri non potest [illegible]lius istarum Lachri-[illegible]rum pereat. August. [illegible]nfess. L. 3. Cap. 12.*

Say not, Oh! but I have prayed and yet see no answer to my prayers! Well! but continue seeking to the Lord still; despair not of a [illegible]d answer at last. That famous Mr. *Rogers* [illegible], would sometimes say, *If I see a child that [illegible] a Godly father or a godly mother, I shall ha[illegible]*

ho[illegible]

hope for him a long time, but if he hath a godly Father and Mother too, He never leave hoping for him until I see him turned off the Gallows.

2. Let me direct my Exhortation to the Children of Godly parents: There are many such that hear me this day: *Be you exhorted to know and serve and seek the God of your Fathers.*

Consider therefore,

1. *That the Lord is your Fathers God.* Know the God of thy Father, saith David, Prov. 27. 10. *Forsake not thy Fathers friend.* And wilt thou forsake thy fathers God, who is the best friend that ever thy Father had? Children are loth to part with other things because they were their Fathers; As Naboth said concerning his vineyard, *God forbid that I should part with the inheritance of my Father.* 1 King. 21. 3. The Lord was the inheritance of thy Father, and wilt thou let goe thy interest in him? Remember and consider that Scripture, Exod. 15. 2. *The Lord is my Fathers God, and I will exalt him.* So say thou, the Lord is my Fathers God, and therefore I will fear & seek and serve him.

Consider. 2. *The good & benefit that will follow upon a sincere seeking to the Lord:* If there were nothing more to be said, but only this, it should be a prevailing Motive, *viz.* That then your parents will have joy in you; A wise son (*i. e.* a godly son) maketh a glad father. The Apostle John hath such an expression as this, *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth.* 3. Joh. 4. Now is there any greater joy to a godly Father, then to see truth of grace in his children; this comforts him more than to see that his Children are become rich or great in the world. Know also for your encouragement, that if you seek unto the Lord with your whole heart, He will be found of you: Yea, though your sins and

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vocations have been never so great: was there ever a greater Sinner then Manasseh, the son of blessed Hezekiah, *Yet when he besought the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers, and prayed unto him, he was entreated of him.* 2. Chron. 33.12,13. O think of it, you that, though the children of holy parents, have been hainous sinners before the Lord, seek him sincerely, and he will pardon all your sins, and save your souls from eternal death. I remember I have read concerning the [1] Emperour *Otho* the 2d. that having a son whose name was *Luitolp*, an haughty young man, that rebelled against his Father, and for safety betook himself to the City of *Mentz*, which being beseiged by the Emperour, *Luitolp* fled to another place; and on a day when his Father was in the field, his son unexpectedly came to him and kneeling before his Father, humbly begged for pardon, with tears acknowledging his offences, and that he was worthy of a thousand deaths; but if it would please him to give him his life, he should ever be a loyal and obedient son for the time to come: presently his Fathers bowels yerned over him, and he restored that prodigal son to his former place and dignityes, who ever after approved himself as became a loyal Subject and dutifull Son. How much more will the blessed God pardon you, and accept you into his favour, all your Rebellions notwithstanding, if indeed you humbly and sincerely seek unto him? Yea and God will bless you when your Parents shall be taken from you; he will then be a father to you. Psal. 27.10. *When my Father and my mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up*, viz. as a tender hearted father taketh up his child into his arms, and bosome. It is therefore said concerning the just man, that *his Children are blessed after him.*

[1] Impartial Hist. p. 223.

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Prov. 20.7 And Jacob told his Sons that though he died, God would be with them, Gen.48.21. It is also noted concerning Isaac, that *God blessed him after the death of his Father Abraham*, Gen. 25.11. Not but that the Lord blessed him before that, only after his Fathers death, the blessing of the Lord was upon him more then ever.

Consider, 3. *The evil that is in your not seeking the Lord.* What a grief of mind will this be to your godly Parents? The Father of a fool hath no joy. Alas! there is many a poor parent may say to their Children, as Jephtah upon another account spake to his daughter, judg.11.35. *He rent his cloathes, and said, alas my daughter, thou hast brought me very low, thou art one of them that trouble me.* Why should you bring your Parents down with sorrow to their graves? How did it go to the heart of David, when Absolom dyed, and was cut off in his sins? 2 Sam.18. 33. *He was much moved, and as he went, thus he said, O my Son Absolom, my Son, my Son Absolom, would God I had dyed for thee, O Absolom, my Son, my Son.* As if he had said, had I dyed, my Soul had been happy, but now thou art dead, I have no other hope but that thy Soul is suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Remember that this will aggravate your sin, and condemnation, that you were born of godly Parents, and did not walk in their steps, Jer.50.7. *they sinned against the hope of their Fathers*; it is mentioned as the great aggravation of their sin. Such Children roll reproach upon the Covenant of God; they cause men to say, there is nothing in being in Covenant with God, nor is it any mercy to be born of Parents that fear the Lord. And will not the Lord judge you for causing such a vile reproach to be cast upon his holy Covenant? you will be most inexcusable before the Lord another day; If a righteous man

man beget a Son that becometh a Robber, or an Adulterer, shall he live? he shall not live, but dye, and his blood shall be upon him, Ezek. 18. 10, 13. The blood of thy Soul shall be upon thy own head; All the instructions, Exhortations, Admonitions, Prayers, Examples of thy godly Parents, will be brought in as so many witnesses for thy condemnation at the last day; yea, the tears of thy blessed Parents will be as oyl to make the everlasting flames of hell burn the more vehemently upon thy Soul, throughout the dayes of Eternity; *The Lord will cast thee off for ever*; Thy Father that begat thee, thy Mother that bare thee, will not pitty thee when thou shalt be sentenced to eternal Death at the last day. Remember Dives; In hell he lift up his eyes being in Torments, and cryed, Father Abraham! have mercy on me; but all the mercy his Father Abraham would shew to him, was, he said, *Son, remember that in thy life time thou hadst thy good things*; As if he had said, nay, thou art justly dealt with. So will thy Parents say to thee, Remember that in thy life time we instructed thee, and thou hadst good counsel given to thee many a time, but thou wouldest not regard it. Oh consider of it! yea know, that if thou dyest in thy sins, thy godly Parents will stand forth, & testifie against thee, before the Lord Jesus at the last day. As that blessed man Mr. *Bolton* would sometimes solemnly profess to his Children, [*Children, let any of you meet me at the day of Judgement, in an unregenerate Christless estate if you dare, I will then testifie against you before the Lord.* Yea, the godly Parents will joyn with the Lord Jesus, in passing a Sentence of Eternal Condemnation upon them. We read in the book of Revelation, how the Saints cry, Hallelujah, our God hath judged the great whore, Righteous are his Judgements, and when the smoke

See Bolton's life.

of

of her Torment rose up for ever and ever, they worshipped God, and said, *Amen, Hallelujah*; Even so, when the Son of God shall say to thee, depart thou cursed wretch into Everlasting Fire, thy Father will say, *Amen, Lord Jesus*! This is the Son, this is the daughter, that I so often instructed and warned, and told them if they did not repent of sin, and get an interest in Christ, they should certainly perish for ever, but they would not hear, therefore let thy Justice be glorified for ever in their eternal confusion. O what an heart hast thou, if this break it not? Nevertheless,

Consider, 4. *There are many Children of godly Parents to be seen, that do not seek the Lord God of their Fathers.* Yea, how many such are there in *New-England*, that are not of their Fathers principles? If a Temptation should come it is to be feared, that the greatest part of this Generation would comply, and disown that cause which their Fathers suffered for. How many that are not of their Fathers Spirit; not heavenly minded, but pursuing worldly Interests with their whole hearts; Not zealous for God, and his glory, but lukewarm, and wofully indifferent in the matters of Religion; Not in practice and conversation like their Fathers; Not of an holy godly conversation, but loose and vain, & vile and vitious; Swearers, Gamesters, given to rioting, and drunkenness, Chambering and wantonness? Nay, how many are there before the Lord in this Congregation, that never sought the God of their Fathers, even to this day? Some that never prayed in their lives, or never in earnest; You Children, it may be you say a prayer or a few words that you have been used to, but are you in earnest? do you cry to God for your lives? do you take the Kingdome of Heaven by violence? O but few such!

Consider

Consider, 5. *You know not how soon your finding time may be past and gone*, therefore now seek the Lord; up and be doing, lest thy Sun go down at Noon, and God make the day dark over thy Soul. Dost not thou know that the Lord useth to make quick work with the Children of his Servants, when they will not seek him, albeit they have been brought up under the solemn warnings of God? It may be he will give thee up to a reprobate sense, and his Spirit for ever cease striving with thee; then woe woe be to thee, saith the Lord. Remember how it was of old: when the Sons of God, (even the posterity of godly Seth) the posterity of eminent professors of Religion, did degenerate, *God said his Spirit shall strive no longer with them*, Gen. 6. 3. *my Spirit shall not always strive*. Or death may come upon you; How many young men that have fallen down slain of late? The Sword is raging, and how are they that are of *the rising Generation numbred for the Sword*? Deadly Arrows are flying over your heads, yea, death is climbing in at windows, and carrying away young men apace; now if death overtake thee before thy Soul be got into the City of refuge, it had been good for thee never to have been born; It will be too late to seek the Lord then; If thou shouldest then seek him early, thou canst not find him; When once the gates of death are shut upon thee, and thou locked fast under the bars of the pit; When once thy Soul is out of thy body, in a moment it shooteth the Gulf of Eternity, and then though thou shouldest seek and cry till Heavens Earth shakes, and pray, and weep Seas of tears of blood, all will be in vain: O thy Soul, thy Soul shall weltring in a fiery Ocean, as long as the Eternal God shall have any Being! Can thy heart endure to think of this? No? O then seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near.

Somer-

Something let me speak by way of Direction briefly;

1. *Be thankfull to the Lord in that he hath given you to be born of godly parents*: in that you have been (as David speaketh) cast upon the Lord from the womb And he hath been your God from your mothers belly. Psal. 22. 10. You might have been born of such Parents as would have nursed you up in ignorance, profaneſs or idolatry, and ſo your ſouls have been under a neceſſity of periſhing for ever, but the Lord hath given you to be of parents that have deſigned you for God, and for his glory. Yea it was for your ſakes eſpecially that your Fathers ventured their lives upon the rude waves of the vaſt Ocean. Was it not with reſpect unto poſterity, that our Fathers came into this wilderneſs? that they might train up a generation for Chriſt: Bleſs God that ever you had ſuch Fathers.

2. *Plead the Lords gracious Covenant with him*, he is very willing that you ſhould doe ſo: *Ask me concerning my ſons and concerning the work of my hands command ye me*, Iſa 45. 11. You ſay you cannot give grace to your own Souls. True! But hath not the Lord in the Covenant of grace ſaid, *I will give you a new heart*, Ezek. 36. 26. Plead that Promiſe, you eſpecially that have had the Covenant ſealed to you; why ſhould you let your Baptiſm lye by you, as if it were of no uſe? Go to God in ſecret, and ſay, Lord thou haſt promiſed to give a new heart to the children of thy Servants, & thy Covenant hath been ſealed to me [illegible] Baptiſm; Oh give me a new heart.

3. *Doe not reſt in any thing that is external* [illegible] relation to godly parents, & viſible relation on that account; it is not your parents ſeeking unto God will ſave you, except you ſeek him your ſelves alſo. Did not the Lord ſay to the children of Iſrael, *Are ye not as the children of Ethiopians unto me?* Amos. 9. 7.

They vainly trusted, that no destruction should ever come upon them, because they were descended from blessed Ancestors. You may be as far from eternal salvation as the Children of Ethiopians for all that, if you do not serve the God of your Fathers. Therefore John Baptist said, *Think not to say, we have Abraham for our Father*, *Matth.*3.9. I have known some that have been so foolish as to think they should be saved, only because they were the Children of godly Parents, though they lived in the neglect of God, & of their own Souls. Beware of so perverting the Truth delivered unto you. And rest not in being outwardly civil and blameless; was not Paul so before his Conversion, Phil.3.6. And they that have been advantaged with a religious Education, oftentimes are so, though never truly converted. Beware also of taking up a form of godliness without the power of it. O you that are the Children of godly Parents, if you outwardly observe the Sabbath day, and pray in secret, and read the Scriptures, (all which things I charge you in the Name of the Lord, that you attend unto them whilst you live) you will be apt to rest here, without an interest in the glorious Righteousness of the Son of God, but for the love of your immortal Souls, I beseech you, deceive not your selves; build not upon a false foundation, look to it, in the fear of God, that your hearts be perfect before him.

4. *Never leave seeking God until you find him.* Seek, and Seek, and Seek again, until you know that you have obtained a saving interest in Jesus Christ, and in the favor of God through him. O make thorough work of it in matter of your Conversion, be not almost but altogether Christians; so shall you find that the blessing of Prayers, and Covenant of your gracious God will come upon you for evermore.

A Discourse

A Discourse

Concerning the Danger of

APOSTASY,

Especially as to those that are the Children and Posterity of such as have been eminent for God in their Generation.

Delivered in a Sermon, preached in the Audience of the general Assembly of the Massachusetts Colony, at Boston in New-England, May 23. 1677. being the day of Election there.

By INCREASE MATHER,
Teacher of a Church in *Boston* in *New-England*.

Jer. 23. 28. *He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully.*

1 Tim. 5. 21. *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.*

Tit. 2. 15. *These things speak and exhort and rebuke with all Authority.*

Boston, Printed in the Year, 1679.

THe Title-Page prefixed to this Discourse, intimateth the Time and Occasion of its delivery. I had no cause to (nor did I) expect, that it would fall to my lot to speak, before the choice was made; If I had, I would have used means to prevent that trouble from coming upon my self or others. But it may be, God did it to prove me and see whether I would please men or Christ. And I hope I may (in some measure) say after the Apostle, We are bold in our God to speak. Our Exhortation was not of deceit, but even so we speak not as pleasing men but God, which tryeth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, nor of men sought we glory. That great Reformer in Scotland, when upon his Death-bed, could say with comfort, That I did forbear none of what condition soever, I did it out of the fear of my God, who hath placed me in the function of his Ministry, and I know will bring me to an account. even so I must confess, the awfull sense of the great opportunity which the Lord put into my hands to discharge my Conscience, in being witness to his Name and Truth, & of the account which I certainly know I must give to him, caused me to speak as I did; and to avoid more controversal Discourses. There is indeed one particular insisted on, which is now become a matter of scruple & distast to some among us, viz. that which concerns the Magistrates power in matters of Religion. But as it was by me either intended or expressed, I know not to this hour why any one should be offended at it. I may better speak in this cause then some others, as having my self had experience what it is to have Conscience imposed on, and therefore would be loath that any truly conscientious should be burdened, and it is sufficiently known that I have a greater latitude & indulgence in the point of Toleration, then many hitherto

then my self have. Nevertheless, I judge it most unreasonable that pretended liberty of Conscience, should be an Asylum for the profanest errors to take Sanctuary in: as though men must therefore have liberty to Profane Sabbaths or Sacraments, or set up an Altar against the Lords Altar, and their Threshold by his Threshold, and their Posts by his Posts, when and where they please. It can not be, but the Lord will be provoked by such things; especially in New-England, where men are not under such Temptations to forsake their assembling themselves together, as in some other places; and where zeal on the other hand hath been notorious, so that such Lukewarmness will in a people, circumstanced as we are, be an evidence of Apostacy.

I remember I had once the happiness to be acquainted with an eminent Divine in an other part of the world, who having an opportunity to give his Testimony against a prevailing evil, which the greatest in that nation were at that time too far carried away with, in his Sermon had this Expression, What I have to say, if it were in a Church full of Kings I would speak it. Such a Spirit I believe doth become an Ambassador of Christ, when delivering the Message of his Master Jesus. I shall therefore add no more at present, only conclude, that if what is here expressed be but my own words or thoughts, its no great matter what's said, but if it be (as I am perswaded it is) the Word and Mind of Christ, then that God whose I am, and desire to serve, and in whose Name I have spoken, will surely confirm his word.

Boston, 22. day of the 2.
Moneth. 1678.

INCREASE MATHER.

1 Chron. 28. 9.

But if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

AS there is a peculiar Excellency in all the Books of Scripture, becoming the Majesty of their Author; so it is in special manner true with respect unto this sacred Book of *Chronicles*; which is [a] not the same with those Chronicles we sometimes read of in the Kings, those being civil *Records*, but these wholly of a divine Inspiration, containing the History of no less then three thousand & five hundred years; even from the first man Adam unto the Jews Return from the Babylonish Captivity & many years after that also. The Hebrews suppose it, (or at least some part of it) to be the last Book of Scripture that was written, and therefore they are wont to place it last in their Bibles, as the Concluding Book of the old Testament. The Greeks entitle it, [*ton paraleipomenon Biblion*,] Because divers things most worthy of eternal Commemoration, are recorded in these Books which are no where else to be found. So in this Chapter, we have David's solemn dying Exhortation. Words which deserve to have continual use, yet are no where else seen (at least wise not in this ample manner) but in this Chapter. And it was in a very solemn Assembly that these words were spoken; indeed in a *general Assembly*, wherein the Lords people, both as to civil and Ecclesiastical order were come together, for the esta-

bliſhment of another Ruler amongſt them, accordingly David doth here direct his Exhortation, firſt to the Repreſentatives of the People, *ver.* 1. *And David aſſembled all the Princes of Iſrael, the Princes of the Tribes, and the Captains of the Companies unto themſelves, &c.* Hence they are ſaid to be all Iſrael, ver. 8. *in the ſight of all Iſrael*, h. e. the Heads and Repreſentatives of all Iſrael, and therefore are ſaid to be *the Congregation of the Lord*. Often in the Scripture by *the Congregation*, the Heads and Rulers of the Congregation are meant. Now the Exhortation unto them is, that they would *keep and ſeek all the Commandments of the Lord*, h. e. that they would obſerve what they did know, and ſeek to know more of the mind of God. The motive whereby he urgeth this, is, becauſe the Lord had promiſed the good Land to them; but it was upon that condition of their keeping his Commandments, therefore it did highly concern them, to be careful about that matter. 2dly, he directs his Exhortation to him that was to be eſtabliſhed as chief Ruler, ſcil. to his Son Solomon, whom God appointed to ſucceed his Father in the Government. Now ſincerity was the main thing which David his Father did exhort him unto, in the beginning of this Verſe. *And thou Solomon my Son know thou the God of thy Father, and ſerve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind.* This is further urged from three motives, 1. From the conſideration of the divine Omniſcience, *for the Lord ſearcheth all hearts, and underſtandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.* 2dly, From the benefit of good, which would follow upon ſeeking to him, *if thou ſeek him he will be found of thee.* 3. From the evil that is in forſaking him; In the words that before us; which though they were ſpoken to Solomon, yet were they of equal concern

others being Circumstanced as he was, *i. e.* that were of the younger, Rising, succeeding Generation, being also the Children and posterity of godly Parents. Especially, the words did and do concern those that are the *Posterity* of *David*, that is to say, of such as have been eminent Servants of God in their Generation. The Doctrine which I would therefore (by the help of Christ) insist on, conceiving that it may not be altogether unsuitable for this great Audience, is this.

Doct.

That if they that are the Children and Posterity of Gods eminent Servants shall forsake the Lord, he will cast them off for ever. In the doctrinal handling of this Truth, there are four things which may be briefly enquired into, 1. When men especially the Children of Gods Servants, may be said to forsake him? 2. What is implyed, in this casting off for ever? 3. What forsaking of God that is, which will be attended with such casting off. 4. The Reason of this dreadful procedure of the most High towards the Posterity of his People.

Quest. 1. *When may men be said to forsake the Lord?*

Answ. 1. *When they depart from the blessed Truths of God, then may they be said to forsake him.* Thus the Apostle chargeth it upon the Apostatizing Galatians, that they were *removed from him that called them*, Gal. 1.6. *i. e.* they had forsaken God himself, because they had corrupted and forsaken the great Truths of the Gospel. All Truth is from God, therefore he is styled, *the God of Truth*, Deut. 32.4. Yea, Truth it self, 1 Joh. 5.6. And Truth is said to be his Name. Christ said to his faithful ones in the Church of Philadelphia, *thou hadst not my Name*, Rev. 2.13. The Truths of Christ were much opposed by the Jewish Church, by the Hereticks of those dayes, only some did stedfastly adhere thereunto, and these are said to hold

hold fast his Name. So then to forsake the Truth is to forsake the Lords Name. Especially when there is Apostacy from great-Foundation Truths in Religion, the Lord is forsaken. Albeit every Truth hath the Name of God stamped upon it, yet there are some Truths which have more of his Name on them, [illegible] others have, that the disowning of them is absolutely to reject the Lord, namely fundamental Truths, which indeed are not many nor hard to be known. Moreover, when those Truths are disowned by Children, which their Fathers were eminently engaged in the profession of, (though they should not be fundamental in their natures) such Children may be said to forsake the Lord.

2. *When men deify any other Object besides the Lord*; They that set up other things in Gods stead, in their so doing forsake the Lord, so it is when men give religious worship to any other besides him, who alone ought to be feared, Thus the Children of Israel because they did worship *Baal and Ashtaroth*; h. e. the [b] *Sun* and *Moon*, (for those were the first Creatures that the Gentiles Idolized, and the Syrians called the Sun, Baal; and the Moon Ashtaroth) they are therefore charged with forsaking God. Judg. 2. 12, 13. Idolatry is the greatest Apostacy in the world. Such are by way of eminency styled *forsakers of God*, Deut. 32. 15. *He forsoot God*, meaning that they did Apostatize to Idolatry, [illegible] fore in ver. 16. it is added that *they provoked him to Jealousie with their Strange Gods*, that is to [illegible] new Gods or Idols, for new things are [illegible] 17. *They sacrificed to new Gods which came [illegible] whom their Fathers feared not.* And this is [illegible] only with respect unto that more gross Idolatry, when men shall avow the Service of Idols, but also concerning secret, spiritual, heart Idolatry, even worldliness,

[b] Cura. [illegible] Lapide [illegible] locum [illegible] de [illegible] Syria [illegible] b. 5.

worldlineſs, *Math.*6.24. *Ye cannot ſerve both God and Mammon.* The Servants of Mammon, *h.e.* of the world, are forſakers of God, when men pour out the ſtrength of their affections upon worldly Objects, or place their chief delight and confidence in theſe things, it argueth an heart departure from the Lord, *Jer.*17.5. If Fathers have ſought Chriſt, and the things of Chriſt in the firſt place, and their Children ſhall come after them, and eſpouſe a worldly Intereſt, it is a woful God-forſaking.

3. *There is a forſaking God, in reſpect of his holy Inſtitutions.* Hence a people that are without Ordinances, are ſaid to be without God, 2 Chron.15.3. it is there mentioned, that *Iſrael had for a long ſeaſon been without the true God,* becauſe they had been without the Miniſtry, and without Ordinances. If theſe be not duly obſerved the Lord is forſaken, *Iſai.*65.11. *But ye are they that forſake the Lord, and forget my holy Mountain,* ſo that to forget the holy Mountain, *h. e.* the neglect of divine worſhip and Ordinances, is a forſaking of the Lord. Look as when the Lord doth deprive a people of his Ordinances, he is ſaid to forſake them, *Jer.*23.33. *I will even forſake you ſaith the Lord*; the meaning is (ſaith *Calvin*) you ſhall no more have Miniſtry and Ordiances, amongſt you, ſo when they are willing to be deprived thereof, they may be ſaid to forſake him, Judg. 10. 6. *they forſook the Lord, and ſerved him not.* Not to regard the ſervice of God is to forſake him. For in Ordinances, we have to doe with God, Hebr.4.13. in hearing the word, in Prayer, in Sabbaths, in Sacraments, we have to doe with God. Or if the holy Ordinances be corrupted, then the Lord is forſaken. And ſo it is when men will be adding their inventions to Gods inſtitutions, Pſal. 106.39. *Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went*

a whoring with their own inventions. When men follow their own inventions they goe a whoring from the Lord, of this nature were the high Places of old 2 Chron. 33. 17. *The People did sacrifice in the high places, yet to the Lord their God only.* Those high Places were lawfull to worship God in, until the Temple was built, but after that it was a breach of the second Commandment to place any Religion in them, and therefore in some degree a departure from the Lord. If Fathers have prized Ordinances above the world, and endeavoured to uphold them in their power and purity, but their Children after them shall not regard whether they enjoy the Ordinances of Christ or no, or if they doe, shall not be carefull and studious to keep them pure, according to Scripture Rule, they fall under this dreadfull charge of Apostacy from God.

4. There is a forsaking of God in respect of Conversation. There are that by works doe deny God, Tit. 1. 16. An holy heavenly Conversation is expressed in the Scripture, by that of *walking with God*, Gen. 5. 24. & 6. 9. Therefore an evill conversation is a departure *from God*. It is called a forsaking the Law of the Lord, Jer. 9. 13. By a corrupt conversation men deviate from the Law, and are such Apostates as the Text speaketh of. In this respect those wicked men, whose foundation was destroyed with the flood, (as Eliphaz speaketh) even the sinners of the old world were Apostates from God. We doe not read of (nor doe I believe that there was) any Idolatry in the old world, but they were over run with Atheism, Pride, Sensuality, Vncleaness, Oppression, and the like scandalous Enormityes. And the Apostacy of the Children of Israel, did consist partly in this, as we see in that wofull instance of the Benjamites, the greatest part of whom the Lord cast of

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for ever. Yea and the Antichriſtian Apoſtacy predicted in the New Teſtament, doth conſiſt partly in this: We know that the Anti-Chriſtian Generation (Papiſts I mean) are generally not only (as all of them are) horribly ſuperſtitious and idolatrous, but of moſt profane and debauched Conſciences and converſations; in the Book of the Revelations we read of their murthers, Sorceryes, Fornications, Theſts, Rev. 9. 21. If then the Children of the Covenant ſhall not walk worthy of God, but in the wayes of Pride, Senſuality, Unrighteouſneſs; If when Fathers have been of an holy, exemplary converſation their Children ſhall be unholy and profane, they are forſakers of God, concerning whom he hath threatned, to caſt them off for ever.

5. *When the fear of God is wanting in the hearts of ſuch as are above others bound to fear and ſerve him, they are forſakers of the Lord.* For there is an inward heart departure from God, as well as that which is outward and viſible: So it is when there is no faith nor fear of God in the heart, Hebr. 3. 12. *Take heed leſt there be in any of you an evill heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.* Infidelity in the heart is the root of all Apoſtacy. If the Children of godly Parents ſhall not endeavour truly to fear and ſerve the Lord God of their Fathers, they are ſuch as do forſake him, yea and ſuch as he will caſt off for ever. And therefore in this Context David did inſinuate unto his Son Solomon, that if he did not ſerve the Lord even with a perfect heart, he ſhould be caſt off for ever.

We proceed therefore to the ſecond Queſtion viz.

Queſt. *What is implyed in this caſting off for ever?*

Anſw. 1. *It impleth a change as to divine Diſpenſation.* In the Scripture, when the Lord threatned to call off his people, that is intended, viz. that he would

would make an alteration as to the tenor of his dispensations towards them: here it is set in opposition to *finding God*, If thou seek him, he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him he will cast thee off: Now finding God doth imply the enjoyment of his favour, and therefore in *Casting off* is implyed the deprivement of the Lords favourable presence. It is indeed most true, that the special favour of God is unchangeable, Rom. 5. 2. *This Grace wherein we stand.* He that hath once access into the special grace and favour of God stands and abideth therein for ever, in respect of that there is no casting off for ever; In the Covenant of grace the Lord hath promised saying, *I will not cast off the Seed of Israel for all that they have done*, Jer. 31. 37. But then there is common favour, in respect of outward blessings, which are the effects of common love, & that may utterly cease, *Hos.* 9. 15. *I will love them no more.* I have loved them, (saith the Lord) *i. e.* bestowed outward mercyes on them, but I will do so no more. They shall have no more such dayes of peace, no more such plenty, no more such means of grace as once they did enjoy. Thus of a friend the Lord may turn to be an Enemy, Isai. 63. 10. *But they rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their Enemy, and he fought against them.* Whilst a Covenant people carry it so as not to break Covenant, the Lord blesseth them visibly, but if they degenerate then blessings are removed, and woful Judgements come in their room, & that's implyed in this casting off which the Text speaketh of, *fell*, that mercyes shall be taken away, as it was said of Saul that when God cast him off he took away his mercy from him, 1 Chron. 17. 13. because he was deprived of that great outward blessing and dignity which once he did enjoy, And the sending of contrary miseryes to

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those mercyes; that instead of peace there shall be Wars, instead of plenty poverty, instead of health terrible sicknesses, instead of planting, plucking up and destroying, these things are implyed in this casting off, thus Psal.89.38. *But thou hast cast off and abhorred; thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.* I conceive the Psalmist in those words hath [c] respect to the sad change of Providence which befel the Lords People in Rehoboams time, for the Psalm was written by *Ethan*, who was contemporary with Solomon, and probably lived to see the woful changes which hapned five years after Solomons death, when the Land was invaded and sorely wasted by Heathen Enemies, and some (though not all) of the wrath of God poured out upon his people, and upon the Apostatized Children of David, strong holds were brought to ruine, and they did not stand in the day of Battel as in former times they had done, now these temporal Judgements are called *a casting off.* 2. *It doth imply a discovenanting and unchurching.* If the Children of godly Fathers shall forsake the Lord he will cast them off, *i. e.* it will at last come to this that the Lord will disown them; and excommunicate them, and say they are none of his, for although there is no falling from a state of saving grace, yet they that have only a visible interest in God may fall from that Estate, *what they have shall be taken from them.* They that are internally and sincerely in Covenant with God shall never lose their interest in the Covenant, for they are *betrothed unto the Lord for ever*, *Hos.*2.19. But they that are externally in Covenant, may cease to be the Lords visible people; Thus it came to pass concerning the ten Tribes. Hence the Lord speaketh, as Jer.3.8. *Backsliding Israel committed Adultery, and I had put away and given her a Bill of divorce*, so that the

[c] *Foot in locum*

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marriage Covenant, which was between the Lord & them was dissolved, this is confirmed by the Prophet Hosea, *Chap.2.2.* where the Lord saith *plead with your mother, plead for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband*, so in *Chap.1. ver.9. Call his Name Lo-Ammi, for they are not my people, and I will not be your God*, therefore also the Lord by the Prophet Ezekiel calls the ten Tribes by the name of *Aholah*. The two Tribes the Jews, were then called by the name of *Aholibah*, which signifieth *my Tent*, because as yet God had not rejected them. But the ten Tribes are called *Aholah*, which signifieth *a Tent*, as if the Lord had said they are none of mine, now I have done with them and utterly rejected them, *Ezek.23.4.* Afterwards the Jews also were discovenanted and unchurched. The Prophet Zachariah had foretold that upon their unbelief, in rejecting Jesus Christ the only true Messias, it should be so *I took my staff Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my Covenant which I made with all the People*, Zach.11.10. And Paul tels us that sad Prediction was fulfilled, therefore Rom.11.12. he speaketh of *The Fall* of the Jews, meaning that they were fallen from their visible Church estate to be in the same condition which the Gentile world was in before the coming of Christ, so that they were fallen from heaven to earth; and in *v.* 20,22. he speaketh of their being *broken off* and *cut off*, h.e. cut off from the visible Church, The Apostle [d] in that Chapter doth compare covenanting Abraham to a Root, and the visible Church to an Olive tree, of which there are two sorts of branches, 1. *Natural*, viz. the Jewish Church, 2. *Ingraffed*, i.e. the Church among the Gentiles. Now the natural branches were broken off: and therefore in the New Testament they are declared to be none of the Lords people, Rev.3.9.

[d] *v. Mr Anton of Infant Baptism.*

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They call themselves Jews, but are not so, but are of the Synagogue of Satan. They say they are Jews, i.e. they boast of their being the Lords People, but in truth they are not so (saith Christ) they glory in the name of a *Synagogue*, but now they are not Gods Synagogue, but Satans. And in these dayes of the New-Testament the Lord hath disowned, & un-Churched these and those hat once were his People, Rev.2.5. *I will remove the Candlestick out of his place.* That Threatning is not only fulfilled on Ephesus, but on all the Churches in Asia; there have been in former Ages bright and glorious Candlesticks in that part of the world, but they are long since all broken to pieces. The Romish Antichristian Idolatry, hath prevailed so far amongst Christians for above these thousand years, that they that are overrun therewith, Christ doth declare them to be looked upon, as Gentiles, as Heathens, and that they are not to be looked upon as within the Temple, or as indeed appertaining to the visible Church, Rev.11.2. And this disowning and unchurching a people is called a *Casting them off.* 3. The expression here doth imply *everlasting rejection in the other world.* The Hebrew Phrase [*jazni chaka lagnad*] *Arias Montanus* translateth *execrabitur te in aeternum*, if thou forsake him, he will make thee an eternal execration. Though it be a deep truth, that the line of election [†] doth for the most part run through the loins of godly parents, yet not only so, for men may be descended from godly Parents and Progenitors, and yet be the subjects of eternal Reprobation and Damnation. Math.8.12. *The Children of the Kingdome shall be cast out into outer darkness.* We read of one that could call *Abraham* his *Father*, and unto whom Abraham said *Son* remember that in thy life time thou hadst thy good things, that ne-

† See preced. Serm. p.25.

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nevertheless when he dyed, went to *the place of Torment*. If such Children forsake the Lord, it is not the prayers nor tears of godly Fathers that will save them; Nay, these will be an infinite aggravation of their misery. The tears of a godly Father, if his Children forsake the Lord, will make the flames of Eternal Fire burn the more fiercely upon their Souls for ever. Therefore well might David say to his Son Solomon, *If thou forsake the Lord, he will cast thee off for ever.*

We come in the next place to enquire, *what forsaking of God that is, that will be attended with this casting off?*

Answ. In two words, 1. *this must be understood concerning deep departures from God*, and from his blessed wayes, Hos. 9.9. *They have deeply corrupted themselves therefore he will visit their sins.* The Lord is the God of patience, and of all grace, and thence is very slow in rejecting utterly a people, (or their Posterity) whom he hath once taken into Covenant with himself. Hence it is not lesser departures, but high and great offences against the Lord, that provokes him to cast off his People, *e. g. Idolatry* is a sin that causeth the rejection which the Text speaks of. Yea, it is true with reference unto that Idolatry which is against the second Commandment. When the Children of Israel committed that Idolatry respecting the Calf in the Wilderness, they sinned against the second Commandment, for they would worship the Lord still, only they would do it in such a way, and by such means as God never appointed, and they were in great danger of being cast off for this sin. Hence the Lord said to Moses, *my People have corrupted themselves*, Exod. 32.7. The Lord doth not say *my People*, as he was wont to do, but *thy People*, as if it were said; Now they have violated my Covenant,

Covenant, and deserve that I should for ever disown and reject them. The Asian Churches have been cast off for this sin especially; we may read the sin of those Churches written in dreadful Characters, upon the Forehead of that Judgement which hath destroyed them all. God hath let loose the barbarous Turks upon them, who hate and destroy no men so much as those that worship Images. And as for the Church of Rome, the Apostle Paul did solemnly predict that they should be cast off, Rom. 11. 22. Now it is for this sin principally that the Lord hath cast them off. Again, Heresy causeth this casting off which the Text speaketh of, Societies consisting of such as disown the fundamental Truths of the Gospel, the Lord Jesus disowns them. Hence the Jews are disowned and rejected by the Lord, for although they own some fundamental Truths in Religion, indeed all [e] those six principles mentioned by the Apostle to the Hebrews, (Cap. 6. 1, 2.) the Jews acknowledge, yet there are other foundation Truths, which they reject; That Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah, that Messiah is God as well as man, the Doctrine of original sin, and of salvation by imputed righteousness, all which things are necessary to be believed in order to eternal life, this do they reject and disown; and therefore the Lord hath cast them off. when a People shall be so far degenerate as to loose the Essentials of Religion, they are the Lords no longer. Heretical Assemblies may be the Flocks of those that pretend to be Christs companions, but they are none of Christs Flocks, Can. 1. 7. So for scandalous miscarriages in life & conversation, these provoke the Lord to cast off a professing People. In a building, if once the *materials* be rotted & corrupted, the house will moulder away, the matter being an Essential Cause. And in Church

[e] *Vide Cappellus in Heb.* 6. 1.

building we know that Saints are the material cause; and therefore scandal in life doth destroy the Essentials of a Church, and so brings along with it this casting off which the Text speaks of. 2. *It is an Impenitent, incorrigible forsaking God*, that doth cause him to cast off a people or person. Solomon was guilty (notwithstanding the solemn dying charge of his Father to the contrary) of dreadful forsakings and Apostasies from the Lord, but he repented of them, as we see by the book of *Ecclesiastes*, and therefore the Lord did not wholly cast him off for ever. Notwithstanding great degeneracy in a People, the Lord is not wont to cast them off until he hath used all means for their Recovery, so it was with the Children of Israel of old, 2 Chron. 36. 15. The Scripture hath recorded the names of above twenty Prophets which the Lord sent to his People of old to tell them of their backslidings, and call upon them to repent and reform, before he would cast them off. And though in these dayes of the New-Testament, because men sin against greater light and grace, then in former times, the Lord Jesus maketh quicker work, with an Apostatizing People, then in the dayes of old, and in the years of ancient Generations; and therefore he said to the Church in Ephesus, *except thou consider whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, I will come against thee quickly, and remove the Candlestick out of his place*; nevertheless, he useth means to reduce and recover a backsliding People, before he casts them off, so he did with the Asian Churches, and so hath he done with the Anti-Christian Generation, and therefore raised up great Instruments, who have preached the Everlasting Gospel with a loud voice, and called for Reformation; and might therefore say [f] Jer. 51. 9. *We would have healed Babylon, and she is not*

[f] *Notan* *e Parke-* *o de Polit* *Eccles. &* *tinold de* *l. Rom.* *lesia.*

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healed, therefore her Judgement reacheth unto Heaven and is lifted up even to the Skies. The Lord doth give a first and second admonition before he doth reject; He tryeth what his Word will do, what lesser and greater Judgements will do, yea, and what mercies and deliverances will do, and if nothing will prevail, then he casts off forever. If a Generation be Apostate, and Incorrigibly Apostate, it will not be long before God doth cast them off forever, Jer. 15.6,7. *Thou hast forsaken me saith the Lord, thou art gone backward, therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, I will destroy my People sith they return not from their ways.* In a word, when Apostacy is total and final then the Lord doth reject men, yea, though the Children and Posterity of his own Servants he casts them off forever.

Quest. *But why so?*

Answ. For such *Reasons* as these.

Reas. 1. Because the Transgressions of such Children as the Doctrine speaks of are peculiar provocations; if the Children of David sin their iniquity is attended with special aggravations They sin against greater light, and love, and grace, then may be said of any persons in the world besides; They that rebel against the Light do at last provoke the Lord utterly to reject them. Hence it is that refusing Instruction, is mentioned as the grand procuring cause of this Rejection, Jer. 6.8. *Be instructed O Jerusalem lest my Soul depart from thee, & thou become desolate.* Now thus it is when the Children of Godly Parents forsake the Lord, as Solomon doth acknowledge, how diligent and faithful his blessed Father had been in instructing of him, Prov. 4.3,4. *I was my Fathers Son, he taught me also, and said unto me keep my Commandments and live.* And sins against grace, and peculiar mercy do without Repentance

end in Everlasting Rejection, Amos 3.2. *You only have I known, therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities.* Who ever escape (saith the Lord) to be sure you shall not, because you sin against greater grace and favour then any others in the World ever did. For these causes the Lord threatned Eli that he would cut off his Arm, and the Arm of his Fathers house, inasmuch as he had sinned against peculiar mercies and favours. Especially, sins against tenders of Gospel grace provoke the Lord to cast men off, Math.23.37,38. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered you, as an Hen her Chickens under her wings but ye would not, and now your house is left unto you desolate.* And this is sadly true concerning the Children of godly Parents, they sin against special favours from the Lord, the means of grace is vouchsafed to them, they have many blessed strivings of the holy Spirit with them, which others have not, therefore if they forsake the Lord no wonder if he cast them off for-ever.

Reas. 2. Because such Children are guilty of lamentable Covenant breaking before the Lord, for the Covenant is with Children as well as Parents, Deut.29.10,11,12. *Ye and your little ones do enter into Covenant,* upon this account David saith that the Lord was his God from his Infancy, yea, from his first coming into the world, Psal.22.10. And the like is noted concerning Solomon, and therefore his Father said to him, *my Son build the house of the Lord thy God,* 1 Chron.22.11. The Lord is not only *my God*, but in respect of his gracious Covenant he is *thy God* also. And this seems to be the reason why Abraham is styled the Father of the faithful, [g] not merely on the Covenant of the eminency of his faith, for we read of others in the Scripture, whose faith was not inferior to Abrahams, but in that

[g] See Mr. Carter Abrahams Covenant.

the first unto whom God expresly declared, *I will be a God to thee and to thy Seed*, and withal appointed a sacred sign and Seal of this Covenant. Now Abrahams Covenant is as to the substance of it *Everlasting*. And therefore the Children of the faithful in all Ages, are wrapped under the bond of the Covenant, otherwise there would be a substantial change of the Covenant from what it was at first, then which nothing can be more contradictory to the whole tenour and current of the Scripture. The Apostle therefore testifyeth *that the blessing of Abraham is come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ*, Gal. 3. 14. As God said unto Abraham, I take thee and thy Children into Covenant with my self, so doth he through Jesus Christ say the like to every believing Parent among the Gentiles; And therefore the Lord Jesus did affirm concerning Children, *of such is the Kingdome of Heaven*, Math. 19. 14. [b] It is not only true (saith Christ) that Children did belong to God under the old-Testament, but now that, *the Kingdome of Heaven is at hand*, now that the Church is to be under the heavenly dispensation of the Gospel, Children must be acknowledged there also. And it is for-ever to be observed, that when the New-Testament dispensation was ready to be established the ancient grant concerning Childrens Interest in the Covenant is expresly confirmed, Act. 2. 39. *The promise is to you and to your Children*. Hence then, if such Children do forsake the Lord, they are guilty of violating the Covenant. Now that's an iniquity which doth provoke the Lord to cast off those that are deeply guilty of it, Isa. 24. 5, 6. *They have broken the Everlasting Covenant, therefore they are cursed, burned, desolate*. In old time it was the manner that when a Covenant was made, some Creature or other was killed, and cut in pieces, by which [illegible]

[b] [illegible]

signifyed, that the Lord would kill and cut off him, that being in Covenant with God, did not make conscience, faithfully to keep and observe, that Covenant inviolable for-ever.

Reas. 3. From that infinite indignation, which is in the Lords heart against Apostates. They are fugitives from Christ, and deserting their Captain, the Lord himself will execute Martial Law upon them. No sinners are greater Objects of divine hatred and indignation. Hence the Apostle said unto the Hebrews, when some of them were ready to Apostatize from Christianity to Judaisme, if any man draw back the Soul of God shall take no pleasure in him, Heb. 10.38. meaning that such Creatures, are Vessels of dishonour, and the most loathsome Objects that can be thought of. Hence the Lord doth pursue them with infinite vengeance, he cuts them off, and casts them off for-ever. As that miserable *Spira* at the very moment, when he had renounced the Truth, thought he heard one say to him; *Hence thou Apostate, and receive the Sentence of thy Eternal Damnation.* The Lord is wont to leave marks of his wrath upon such sinners. He brands them, that all the world may be afraid of that iniquity, seldome hath it been known that any have notoriously turned away from the Lord, but visible wrath from Heaven hath fallen upon them. *Jehoram* had been religiously educated under his godly Father Jehoshaphat, but he proved the Apostate child of a gracious Father; And what came on him? God set on the Heathen Arabians, who wasted his Estate, and murdered all his Children save one. Thus did the Lord cut him off. *Joash* was religiously educated under his uncle Jehojadah, but he forsook the Lord, therefore the Assyrians with a small Army destroyed a great Host of his; And afterwards his own treacherous

Servants murdered him. The like we read concerning *Amaziah*. And Histories (besides what is recorded in the Scripture) are full of awful and amazing Examples of the Lords indignation against Apostates, and therefore since if Davids Children do forsake the Lord, they are to be reckoned amongst the number of Apostates, no wonder that he doth threaten to cast them off forever.

We proceed now to a word of Application, and shall insist upon one only use of *Exhortation, let us be exhorted in the Name and Fear of God this day, to endeavour that it may not be with us, as the Text and Doctrine expresseth*, let us every one in our several places, and capacityes endeavour that the present and succeeding Generations in New-England, may not forsake the Lord God of their Fathers, & so endanger their being cast off forever. USE

Wherefore Consider, 1. *What Fathers and Predecessors have been*, they were such as did seek the Lord. As for the body of the present Generation in New-England, it may be said to them, your Fathers were such as did serve the Lord, yea, it was love to God, and to Jesus Christ, which brought them into this Wilderness. As the Lord speaketh, Jer. 2. 2. *I remember the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine Espousals, when thou wentest after me in the Wilderness, in a Land which was not sown.* Our Fathers did not, in their coming hither propound any great matters to themselves respecting this world; only that they should have liberty to serve God; & to walk with him in all the wayes of his worship. As one of our worthies hath aptly expressed, God sifted three Nations, that so he might bring over choice grain into this wilderness. Let us then remember what New-England hath been. It hath been a noble Plant, Jer. 2. 21. *I planted thee a noble Vine, wholly a right Seed.* It hath been a Cedar

dar, our Eyes have seen the Lord fulfilling that Scripture litterally & gloriously, Isai. 41. 19. *I will plant in the Wilderness a Cedar.* The chief of the Fathers in these New-English Churches, they were *Abrahams*. He, when God called him removed out of *Ur* of the Chaldees, to the place which the Lord would shew him, & there built an Altar to the Everlasting God, so did our Fathers remove out of their own Land, when God called them, and came hither, to build an Altar here to the Everlasting God, yea, and they have set the Altar upon its right Basis too. Our Fathers have been *Davids*, that is to say, *eminent Reformers*. Let me speak freely (without offence to any) there never was a Generation that did so perfectly shake off the dust of Babylon, both as to Ecclesiastical and civil Constitution, as the first Generation of Christians, that came into this Land for the Gospels sake, where, was there ever a place so like unto new Jerusalem as New-England hath been? It was once Dr. *Twiss* his opinion, [i] that when *new-Jerusalem* should come down from Heaven *America* would be the seat of it. Truly that such a Type and emblem of new Jerusalem, should be erected in so dark a corner of the world, is matter of deep meditation and admiration.

[i] See Dr. Twiss Letters printed in Mr. Medes work. Book. 1. Epist. 2. 1729.

Consider, 2. *How subject men are, yea, the Children of blessed Parents and Predecessors to Apostasies from God.* It is possible that the Children of David may forsake the Lord, and that in a short time [illegible] Predecessors have been eminent for God, [illegible] cessors have been most degenerate, Jer. 2. 21. *Planted thee wholly a right Seed, how art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange Vine unto me,* Isai. 1. 21. *How is the faithful City become an Harlot? it was full of Judgement, righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers.* It was sometimes said unto good Samuel, 1 Sam.

Sons walk not in thy wayes. And it is noted concerning *Nabal* (a drunken Sot) that he was of the house of *Caleb*, 1 Sam. 25. 3. That ever such a branch should spring out of such a Stock. The Ephraimites were the vilest Idolaters of all the Apostate Children of Israel, yet they were the Posterity of Joseph the best of Jacobs twelve Sons. The perfidious and ungrateful Ziphites were also the posterity of that blessed *Caleb* but now mentioned. Yea, it is a sad Truth, that Religion hath seldome been upheld in the power of it, for above one or two Generations together. Therefore it is recorded concerning the Children of Israel, *they turned quickly out of the way which their Fathers walked in, obeying the Commandments of the Lord, but they did not so*, Judg. 2. 17. The Fathers and Leaders both of the first and second Generation were for purity of worship, but their Children *were not so*. Their Fathers did endeavour to uphold Religion in the power of it, but *their Children did not so*. Their Fathers did order their conversation according to the holy Rules of the word of God, but *their Children did not so*. Hence is that sad complaint by the Prophet, *they rose early and corrupted all their doings*, Zeph. 3. 7. And if we look into the Scripture and view the story of former Ages, we shall see this to be true. The Posterity of the Lords Servants, the Children of the Church have in a little time so forsaken him, as that solemn *Reformation* hath been necessary. Look beyond the Flood and we shall see it so. One of Adams Children with all his numerous Posterity forsook the Lord, Cain was excommunicate out of the Church and became the Father of an excommunicate race and Generation. The first Church that ever was in the world, even that in Adam's Family continued in some measure pure, about the space [k] of an hundred and thirty

[k] [illegible]

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years, (*i. e.* until Seth was born) but then great Apostacy prevailed. When the Church was small in one Family, it was more easy to keep it pure, by casting out the Apostates, but now the world grew numerous, & a multitude of sinners caused impunity in sin, so as that they that were godly and conscientious were fain in the very beginning or first Ages and Generations of the world, to separate themselves and become distinct societies. Hence is that, Gen. 4. 26. *then began men to call upon the Name of the Lord.* It noteth a separation of the Church from the prophane world. After this, a second Apostacy followed, that the Church and world were mixed together, even the Sons of God and daughters of men, the Posterity of godly *Seth* and of wicked *Cain*, until such time as the flood came and cleared the world of them, Gen. 6. 2. Then were the Inhabitants of the Earth in a most corrupt Estate, wherefore the Psalmist (as it seems) alluding to that time saith, *the Lord looked down from Heaven, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God, every one of them is gone back, they are altogether become filthy*, Psal. 53. 2, 3. After Religion was revived in Noah's Family, his Posterity quickly forsook the Lord, *Chams* Apostacy was (as some Learned men observe) about forty years after the flood. The Church was reformed by his ejection, but within sixty or seventy years after that, the builders of Babel set upon their wicked attempt, which was desperate Rebellion against the Lord, although Noah himself was then alive, he could not by all his Authority restrain his grand Children and Posterity, but they would needs become guilty of that Babel defection. After this, with a few Generations the world was overrun with Idolatry. When that iniquity first began is hard say, but it is evident that in Jobs time (who

thou

thought to live about three hundred and fifty years after the Flood) the world was filled with Idolaters, yea, in Abrahams time there was such Apostacy as that Religion was almost gone out of the world; only in his Family there was a pure Church established. Yet his Posterity did quickly forsake the Lord. The Ishmaelites, Midianites, Edomites, (and other Nations) who were of the Posterity of Abraham, the Father of the faithful, in a few Generations lost the substantials of Religion, and were wholly deprived of their Church Estate. The Church was setled in Jacobs Family. Corruption and Superstition did creep into his Family, so as that he was faln to set upon a work of solemn Reformation, and that was not two hundred years after the Reformation begun in his grand-Father Abrahams Family. After the Church was become National, the truth and power of Religion did very rarely continue above one or two Generations at the most (sometimes not so long) witness that Scripture † which was worthily opened and applyed in this place upon the like solemn occasion two years ago, Judg. 2.7,10. And the People served the Lord all the dayes of Joshua, and all the dayes of the Elders that out-lived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel. *And all that Generation were gathered unto their Fathers, and there arose another Generation after them, which knew not the Lord nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.* Those that were the grand-Children of that Generation which was brought out of Egypt, did forsake the God of their Fathers. Hence is that expression, Hos. 10,9. *O Israel thou hast sinned from the dayes of Gibeah*, what horrible wickedness was in Gibeah, we may read in the nineteenth & twentyeth Chapters of the Book of Judges, where we have

† By Mr Flood

the Story of the Levites Concubine, which though it be mentioned towards the close of that Book, yet it seems evident that it hapned before the Judges, for it seems that Jebus (afterwards Jerusalem) was not then taken, Judg. 19. 11, 12. when as that was taken by the Children of Israel before they were governed by Judges, *Chap.* 1. *ver.* 8. So that the wickedness of Gibeah, and their war with the Benjamites, which followed thereupon, was between the death of Ioshuah and the Judges. Moreover, Phinehas the Son of Eleazar, the Son of *Aaron* was Priest in those dayes, Judg. 20. 28. which maketh it very manifest that, that most corrupt Generation, were the grand-Children of those, that were first embodyed as a peculiar People, when the Lord did plant the Heavens, and lay the Foundations of the Earth, that is to say, did build up the Children of Israel as a body politick under Ecclesiastical and civil government, the *third Generation* among that People proved degenerate and apostate. And when they were under a *Theocracy* or Government by Judges, whom the Lord immediately raised up and set over them, how soon did they turn aside from God; when any of their faithful Judges were taken from them, Judg. 2. 19. So in the dayes of the Kings. *After Davids Reformation* Apostacy began in the very next Generation, in the dayes of his Son Solomon, and in the dayes of his grand-Child Rehoboam *all Israel forsook the Lord*, until God by a sad warr awakened them to some Reformation. In Jehoshaphats time Religion was upheld in some power; but in the very next Generation there was Apostacy, Hezekiah was a great Reformer, but his Son Manasseh *built up again the high places, which his Father had destroyed, and seduced the People to do more evil then did the Nations, whom the Lord destroyed before the Chil-*

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dren of Israel. After this. Josiah wrought a great Reformation, and with him did the work of Reformation and Religion dye amongst the Jews, upon Josiahs death a flood of Land destroying sins brake in upon that Generation, that within the space of two and twenty years after Josiah was gathered unto his Fathers, the Jewish State both Civil and Ecclesiastical was quite overthrown; After the Captivity, Ezra and Nehemiah, and the Prophets Haggai and Zachary were great Reformers; But Apostasy quickly prevailed, witness the Prophet *Malachi*, who declareth that not only People but Rulers many of them in his dayes, were become very corrupt. Albeit they were not guilty of that more grosse Idolatry, for which their Fathers were sent into Captivity, yet Covetousness, which is a spiritual Idolatry they were guilty of, whereby they provoked the Lord to send blasting Providences upon them, there being no greater punishment to a covetous man then to have the world taken from him. That Generation did not keep themselves unspotted of the World, upon which account, they are by the Prophet pronounced unclean, Hag. 2.13,14. And when Christ came into the world, he found the Jews in a most degenerate corrupt Estate. Therefore did the Lord call them an *evil* and an *Adulterous*, and a *viperous Generation.*

Furthermore, since the *Church* hath been by divine Institution *Congregational*, in these dayes of the New-Testament, men have been no less subject to Apostasy then in former Ages. The Churches in Galatia were strangely and suddenly overrun with corrupt Doctrine. Hence the Apostle saith, Gal. 1. 6. *I marvel that you are so soon removed unto another Gospel.* He might well marvel, if the observation of [illegible] great Chronologers be true, that within a year [illegible]

after Paul was removed from Galatia to Ephesus, false Teachers succeeded him, and overthrew his Foundation, by endeavouring to advance a mixt Religion consisting of Judaisme and Christianity. And I remember *Jerom*, [m] testifyeth that in his time all Galatia was overrun with damnable Heresies. And as for the Church in Ephesus they quickly declined, Rev, 2, 5. *Remember from whence thou art fal- and repent, and do the first works.* It was (as Historians observe) about twenty years after the Ascention of Christ that Paul gathered a Church amongst the Ephesians. And sixty years after the Ascention, the Book of the Revelation was written; So that there had been a Church in that place about forty years; In which time the first members of the Church must needs (in probability) as to the body of them be dead, and another Generation of Church members were risen up which were not like the first. The Church in *Thyatira*, though not so Apostate when the Revelation was written as some other Churches, yet Ecclesiastical Story mentions how that in a few years after that, there was no Church in that place; which was one Reason why some antient Hereticks [n] denyed the divine Authority of the *Apocalyps*. Because therein mention is made of a Church in *Thyatira*, when as (said they) no Church is to be seen there. To which the Answer is that there had been a Church there only the *Cataphrygian* Heresy did prevail so, as in a little time to swallow up the whole Church. In a word, in all those places, which we read of in the Scripture as having Churches in them, they that are the Successors at this day, are not like unto them that once were in those very places. In many places they have only the name not the Truth of Christianity, and in some not so much as the name. Albeit, when time was, famous Churches might have

In pro- ad Ga- lib. 2.

Epi- ius de s.

have been seen in those places. In former Ages *Asia* was the Seat of the Church, when as in these latter Ages *Europe* is so, [9] which is judged the Reason why the Book of Revelation speaks of Events to come to pass chiefly in Europe; because since the ten Kings arose there, hath the Lord Christ seen meet to uphold and propagate his Church. What shall be said more? It is evident that in the Apostles dayes, the mystery of iniquity began to work, much more after they fell asleep, *Ebion* and *Cerinthus* sprang up whilst the Apostle *John* was yet living. The very next Ages to the Apostles began to depart from, and corrupt the simplicity of the Gospel, in divers respects that might be mentioned, † one long since observed, that although the Church continued a Virgin until after the Apostles death, then it was soon corrupted. It is conceived that *Jude* lived after most of the other Apostles were dead, which is judged to be the reason of his expressing himself as he doth in ver. 17. of his Epistle. Now he complaineth much of a great degeneracy amongst those that professed Christianity.

[9] Mede

† Hegesip-pus

Consider, 3. *The present Generation in New-England is lamentably degenerate.* As sometimes Moses spake to the Children of Israel, Numb. 32. 14. *Behold ye are risen up in your Fathers stead, an increase of sinful men.* So may we say, the first Generation of Christians in New-England, is in a manner gone off the Stage, and there is another and more sinful Generation risen up in their stead. We have in former years enjoyed a sun shine of prosperity, and that hath been attended (as useth to be) with great Apostasy. It is an apt similitude which some use, that as the heat of the Sun in Summer breeds a multitude of Insects, so doth the warmth of prosperity a multitude of Apostates. Men are loth to hear on this Ear, but

if we should deny it, the Lord doth testify against us that it is so, as Ioel. 1. 2. *Hear this ye old men and give ear all ye Inhabitants of the Land, hath this been in your dayes, or even in the dayes of your Fathers saith the Lord.* Were there (saith the Prophet) such Judgements formerly as now there are, you may therefore conclude that you are departed from God, and by your sins have provoked him so to punish you. Thus may it be spoken with reference to our State & Case, and the dispensations of God towards us, you old men that are here before the Lord this day, what say you to this Question, did you know such Judgements upon New-England formerly, as of late we have seen? was it so in the dayes of our Fathers? were there such general and killing diseases? such a long continuing warr? so many hundreds cut off by the Sword, yea, so many hundred Familyes brought to ruine? Candlesticks removed out of their places, and Plantations made desolate! In former times we heard of little besides settlement of Plantations, and gathering of Churches, but of late years, in stead of that, ruines have been multiplyed, yea, mischief upon mischief. God hath been spending his Arrows, and heaping mischief upon this Generation. This Generation is not like the first. How many ignorant ones? how many scandalous ones? There is great rudeness amongst young ones in this Land; and in that respect degeneracy from the good manners of the Christian world. And such sins as formerly were not known in *New-England* are now become common, such as [illegible] sinful gaming, &c. yea, the present Generation as to the body of it, is an unconverted Generation. I would not lessen the grace of God, I know that through grace many of the younger Generation are brought home to God in Jesus Christ, yet in many (I doubt in most) Congregations, the number of [illegible] converts

converts is but small, comparatively with those that remain still in a natural & unconverted Estate. And as for some that have the Root of the matter in them, yet they fall much short of their Fathers grace. Solomon was a good man and his Soul is now in Heaven, yet he was not like David his Father as to measure of grace and faithfulness, 1 *King.* 11. 6. we may see here and there, one that hath much of his blessed Fathers Spirit and Principles, but how rare are such amongst us? Nay, the Interest of *New-England* is now changed, from a Religious to a worldly Interest; and in this thing is *the great Radical Apostasy of New-England.* Is not this to chuse a strange God? Hence do we see warr in the gates. And the Lord hath been letting this Generation blood in the right vein, since he hath taken the world away from them. Trade is almost ruined. Farmes, Oxen, Merchandise, which things have been sought after in the first place, how have they failed? *New-England* is not like this seaven years, to be in that comfortable Estate it was in but two years agoe.

Consider, 4. *There is sad cause to fear what will be last come on this Generation.* There is a consumption on Religion all the world over, as one well observeth [p] the buryals of Christians are frequent and their [p] *Mr. Ball.* *Scripture Light.* *p.* 2. *p.* 2. *p.* 2.

Fathers, Judg. 2. 18, 19. In Nehemiahs time while he was Governour for twelve years together, things went well, and God blessed the Land wonderfully, but when he was removed, in one years time those sins of oppression, sensuality, Sabbath breaking, were become prevailing common evils, Neh. 13. 6. Alas! our Nehemiahs are gone, (I speak it not to reflect upon those that survive, but to awaken from the consideration of our solemn bereavements) our Pauls are likewise departed from amongst us, in which respect we may fear corruption in Religion will follow, Acts 20. 29. Deut. 31. 27. Judg. 8. 33. Have we not seen it in some places, how that within a year after the death of such an eminent Servant of Christ, Apostasy to this day irrecoverable hath prevailed? Furthermore, the heads of the second Generation, that were most likely to have done good, the Lord hath snatched them away, and (like Enoch) translated them to Heaven, in the midst of their dayes; others that are most likely to prevent backsliding, and to be Instruments of reforming a corrupted Generation, are not likely to continue long in this evil world, yea, and of late even since the present warr, that we are bleeding under, began, the Lord hath taken away many young ones, either by Sword or sickness, who were the hopes of the Generation. In many Plantations, they that have dyed of late, were the most hopeful and desirable young men in the places where they lived, an Ominous sign that there is some terrible thing, which God will do, e're this Generation be passed away.

Consider, 4. *How sad it would be if succeeding Generations should forsake the Lord.* It is evident from the considerations mentioned, that it may be so: but it would be dismal if, indeed it should be so, *England* would then become of all Lands the most dark and miserable. How sadly doth the Prophet

speak of *Bethaven*, now what was that *Bethaven*? even the same that was in former times *Bethel*, i. e. the house of God, Hos. 4. 15. with 1 King. 12. 29. Am. 5. 5. If such places where the house of God hath been erected do once degenerate, they are like to become *Bethavens*, places of greatest vanity and iniquity in the world. Hence is that, Hos. 9. 15. *all their wickedness is in Gilgal.* Gilgal was once famous upon Religious accounts. *There* was the Covenant renewed by Circumcision, *there* was the first Passover kept by the Children of Israel, after their coming into the promised Land, *there* did God appear to Joshua, *there* was to be seen a famous Monument of the Lords doing wonders for his people, *there* was the Tabernacle for some time, but in after Generations an Idolatrous Temple was built there, so as that it was a fountain of much wickedness. *All their wickedness was in Gilgal.* It seemeth the Altar of witness was near that place, which through mens corruptions might easily be abused unto much Superstition in after Ages. The Devil seeketh to corrupt those places especially, which once were famous for Religion. As *Polanus* observeth that *Wittenberge* in Germany was the Town where the Reformation in *Luthers* time began, and therefore the Devil did seek to corrupt that place especially, and caused it to become the Seat of grievous Heresies. What Land under Heaven, hath been more noted for profession and Religion, then *New-England?* If Apostacy prevail amongst such a People, it is like to be a sad Apostacy indeed. We see it already; Hence there are such sad complaints of young men that have been bred and born in New-England, when they go abroad into other Lands, that none are so debauched and prophane as some of them. If the Lord should be provoked to pluck up the Hedge of civil government, what a fearful flood

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of iniquity would soon break in? How would maddened and inraged profaneness know no bounds? yea, this Land would become as Sodom, and then most desolating plagues will in short time follow, Ezek. 33. 28. what became of Cain's degenerate race? when they were become, I know not how many millions, the flood swept away every mothers child of them. Wherefore all the Children of men that are now in the world are styled *the Children of Seth*, Numb. 24. 17. [q] because as for Cain's Apostate Generation they all perished in the flood. When the old world did Apostatize, after the Reformation in the dayes of *Seth*, that second Apostasy proved fatal. If Churches in New-England degenerate, it is an Apostasy after Reformation. How fatal is such a relapse like to be? will not the end thereof be with a flood? And truly to be amongst the last Apostates, will be most woful.

[q] Rel. ic. & Annot

Quest. *But what shall be done in order to prevention of Apostasy?* what shall be done, that so succeeding Generations in *New-England* may not forsake the Lord God of their Fathers?

Answ. As I have been meditating an Answer to this Enquiry, I could not but call to mind that Scripture which some of the chief of the Fathers (at least wise those two, [+] whom I have more Reason then any one in the world to think of) have upon the like solemn occasion, improved many years since, I mean that Scripture, Hag. 2. 4. *Yet now be strong O Zerubbabel saith the Lord, and be strong O Joshua, and be strong all ye People of the Land.* If Zerubbabel, Joshua and the People of the Land, if Magistrates, Ministers and People all do what duty requireth, the feared Apostasy, together with the unavoidable calamity comes therewith, may be prevented, however in great measure and for a long time.

[+] My ther tion of Father, ther.

Let

1. Let me apply my Speech unto Zerubbabels, *i.e.* Rulers in the Common-Wealth. Honoured and much esteemed, the welfare or ill fare of the present, yea, and following Generation doth much depend upon you. *Magistrates* are in the Scripture compared to *Corner stones*, because where there is a Common-Wealth erected, the safety of the whole building (under God) depends much upon them. Hence are they also termed Foundations, Psal. 11.3. If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do? If David had perished, Foundations had been destroyed, and the good People of the Land would have dearly felt the loss of him. And when in Sauls time there were corrupt Judges and Magistrates, it is therefore said, that the *Foundations* of the Earth were out of Course, Psal. 82.5. And the Prophet Micah speaking to the Rulers in the Common-wealth of Israel saith, *hear ye Foundations of the Earth*, Mic. 6.2. It is with you (by the help of Christ) to lay such Foundations as shall make Posterity either happy or miserable. David improved the power which God in his Providence entrusted him with, *to serve his Generation according to the will of God*, Acts 13.36. And therefore was an eminent blessing to all that Generation wherein he lived. If the sins of the People under your care and charge should ever provoke the Lord to leave you in an hour of Temptation, you cannot possibly turn aside from God alone, but many others will do so too. *Regis ad Exemplum*, People are apt to follow the Examples of those in place, you know it is mentioned concerning Rehoboam, that he within few years after his coming to the Government did forsake the Lord, and all Israel with him, 2 Chron. 12.1. Let me then with all due respect to your places, and to your worth, and yet with that freedome and faithfulness which becometh a Messenger of the

Lord of Hosts, propound some things to you, which concern the welfare of this, and after Generations in New-England.

1. *I pray you in the Name of the Lord, that a speedy & Effectul Course may be taken, that the great things that God did for our Fathers, in planting these Heavens, and laying the Foundations of this Earth, be faithfully recorded, and transmitted to Posterity.* This hath been thought of, and spoken of long enough, but why is it not done? If it be neglected till the present Generation be passed away, the next will be less capable of doing it. The Title of the Book wherein my Text is, leads me to Insist on this. Why is this Book called the *Chronicles*, but because it contains a *Record* and relation of the things which God did for his People in antient time, yea, from time to time. The Hebrews have termed it; [*dibre hajamin*] *words of dayes* probably (as [r] some conceive) taken out of the royal *Diaryes* of those times, by divine direction and Inspiration; this Book of Chronicles being an unerring [s] *Epitome* of those Chronicles mentioned in the Kings. The Truth is, that above half the old-Testament is a Chronicle of things done, by the Lord, for his People in the years of Antient Generations. You have then Scripture Example abundantly to encourage, in promoting a work of this nature. Hence we read of the Book of *Jasher*, 2 Sam. 1. 18. and of the Book of *Nathan* the Prophet, and of *Gad* the Seer, 1 Chron. 29. 29. and of *Ahijah*, the Shilonite, and of *Shemaiah* the Prophet, 2 Chron. 12. 15. and the Story of the Prophet *Iddo*, 2 Chron. 13. 22. There is also plain Scripture precept [t] as well as Example to move hereunto, see Psal. 78. 5. 6 *For he established a Testimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Israel which he commanded our Fathers, that they should make them known to their Children, that the Generations to come, might know them.*

[r] Oroti-
[s] Va-
tlar.

[t] See
r. Mar-
ls Ser-
n on
al. 102.
p. 35.

even the Children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their Children. And again, Psal. 102. 18. *This shall be written for the Generations to come.* So that this is a duty incumbent upon present Generations to take care that there be a Record of the great works of God towards them, for the benefit of the Generations that shall follow, that so God may be glorified. I perceive that some good men are afraid lest our too great neglect in this matter, may be one thing that God is offended at. And there be two considerations, which may cause such apprehensions not to seem groundless, one is in that this thing hath been formerly urged. [m] That faithful *Shepard* who [m] spake here in the Name of the Lord upon the like occasion, five years agoe, insisted upon this very thing, and yet the matter remains unfinished to this day. Moreover, whilst the body of the first Generation, whom God planted in this Wilderness was alive, there were Essays this way, for it [†] was propounded to, and concluded amongst the Commissioners of the united Colonies above thirty years agoe, that there should be a Collection of special Providences of God towards his New-England people; And that memorials being duly communicated, an History should be compiled according to Truth, for the benefit of Posterity, that they might see how God had dealt with their Fathers, in laying the Foundation of the Churches, and of the Common-Wealth. Now that such things should be concluded, and yet never done cannot please God. Furthermore, how can we testify to Posterity our gratitude towards God, for the great things he hath done for our Fathers, and for us their Children, in more respects then can be now mentioned, except such a lasting Record and Monument as is now spoken of, be brought to perfection. In the Town-house at *Cambridge*, it is written on Mar-

ble Pillars in Letters of gold, such a year God deliv-
ered this place from the Tyranny of Anti-Christ,
and set up his true Religion amongst us, [x] *therefore*
[x] Clark's Examples, vol. 1. 236. *the Senate and People of Geneva, have erected this Monu-*
ment, that so they might testify to Posterity their gratitude
towards God. Let me then entreat you that are Sena-
tors of this Colony, that a work of this nature may
not be alwayes delayed; and the rather, because you
know not whether your opportunity to encourage
such an undertaking, will be of long continuance.
And this may (by the blessing of Christ) be one good
means to prevent Apostasy. The Lord therefore
commanded his People of old, to keep a Record of
his works and signal Providences towards them, that
so their Children after them might set their hope in
God and keep his Commandments, Psal. 78. 7.

2. *I pray you in the Name of the Lord, to take care for*
the propagation of the Interest of the Gospel, that the good
knowledge of the Lord may be amongst the people
under your Government in your time; yea, and af-
ter that also. If ignorance overspread the Land
Apostasy will do so too. Hence David here saith,
know thou the Lord God of thy Father and serve him,
but if thou *forsake him*, &c. intimating, that except
succeeding Generations know the Lord, they will
not serve him, but forsake him. Therefore it con-
cerns the Magistrate, to take effectual care, that the
Land be furnished with able and faithful Ministers;
So we read of Jehoshaphat, that he caused Levites to
be sent into all the Cities of Judah who taught the
People, 2 Chron. 17. 8, 9. And this stands upon Re-
cord to his everlasting Renown. It is not every man
that is fit to be employed as a pulick Teacher. Ez-
ra saith (Chap. 8. 17, 18. that he sent unto such and
such, that they would bring unto him *Ministers for the*
house of God, and that by the good hand of God they

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brought *a man of understanding*: He that is employed in holy things ought to be such an one. Therefore you should endeavour that the future generation may be furnished with a learned Ministry. The [y] Writers of ecclesiastical Story, inform us, how carefull Christians in the primitive times were, for the setling of Schools of Learning, in all places where Churches had been planted, that so there might be able instruments raised up for the propagating of truth in succeeding Generations. And some have well and truly observed, that the interest of Religion and good literature, hath risen and fallen together. It was Julians policy to pull down Schools among Christians, that so he might destroy Religion, [z] concluding that the cause that should not have an able defendant would fall. Therefore let there be a pious and earnest sollicitude about that matter. One of the famous Kings † in our nation caused a law to be established, that all Parents should bring up their children in Learning. I know there are good laws amongst us, respecting inferiour Schools, though I doubt as to execution there is great defect in that as well as in other matters. Let me also beseech you to endeavour that what concerns the *Colledge* may be revived, and if it may be in the place where it hath formerly flourished, I have nothing to say against that but much for it rather; & that greater encouragement be given to those that labour as Tutors there. [a] That was propounded to this general Assembly four years agoe, by him that did then so faithfully declare the counsel of God to this Generation. I would gladly second a motion of that nature, as supposing that more of the welfare of the uprising generations is concerned therein then many are aware of.

I remember it is noted concerning the learned *Chy-*

[y] Ca 2.c.7. 3.c.7.

[z] *Mr ner of neces of bu learn for a* [illegible] † *Ex v.Cl. vol.* 1 173.

[a] *Oak Elec Serm* 57.

Ma-

trum, that he prevailed with the Princes of *Megapol* to bestow 3500 crowns of yearly Revenue, upon the Vniversity of *Rostock*, by which means the interest of Religion was wonderfully promoved. And it was one of the usual wishes of that excellent man, *Utinam Reges ac Potentes rerum Domini, majorem Ecclesiæ ac Scholarum curam susciperent.* O (said he) that Magistrates would be more carefull to encourage Schools of learning, and thereby promote the good of the Church. The Reformers did in this way and by this means carry on the interest of Religion, & propagate the Truth to after ages. *Calvin* therefore perswaded the Senate of *Geneva* to erect an illustrious School in that city wherein the Tongues and Arts were taught; and from whence many worthy Instruments issued forth. And that excellent Prince *Cassimire* did the like at *Neostad*, where *Ursin* and *Zanchi* were sometimes Professors So the Senate of *Grunberg* erected a Colledge, and chose the learned *Buchholtzer* to govern it. The like was done at *Herborn* by Prince John of *Nassau* at the perswasion of *Olevian*, where also *Piscator* taught and flourished; So at *Leyden* in Holland. And (not to mention more places) the same course was taken at *Edenborough* in Scotland; of which Colledge that famous and holy man, Mr. *Rollock* was the first president, and many choice Instruments of Gods glory have there been educated. Wherefore let what concerns this matter, be amongst the chief of your cares and endeavours.

Further, I entreat you, let it be your care, that none but faithfull ones (as far as men can judge) be employed as publick Preachers: Though the just liberties of Churches should not be infringed, yet that every Plantation in the Country should have allowance to chuse, whom they please to labour in the publick dispensation of the word, may be in time a

great inlet to ignorance, error and profaneſs. Therefore let me humbly propound to you, that you would think of ſome expedient, reſpecting the approbation of ſuch, as ſhall be under a conſtant improvement as publick Teachers. Yea, and that there be not any place ſetled without ſuch. No doubt but one reaſon why the Lord hath let looſe the Heathen againſt us, hath been, becauſe ſome Plantations have been erected, and yet no publick acknowledgement of God amongſt them, but they have lived like Heathen, without Sabbaths, without the word and Prayer, which are moral duties that all are bound to attend: and it is therefore incument on the Magiſtrates to ſee that they do ſo. People are ready to run wild into the woods again, and to be as heatheniſh as ever, if you doe not prevent it. Take care alſo I beſeech you, for the propagation of the Goſpel amongſt theſe poor Indians. You know it is expreſſed in the *Patent*, as one main end propoſed by our Fathers in their coming into this Wilderneſs, that ſo they might endeavour the Converſion of the Natives, and ſet up the Kingdome of the Lord Jeſus amongſt them. God by the late War hath made way for the Goſpel to be entertained amongſt them, more then formerly; ſhould not this be conſidered!

3. *I beſeech you in the Name of the Lord, that you would in ſpecial manner beware of that which was the ſin of Solomon*: and what was that? Truly ſinfull Toleration was Solomons great iniquity, whereby he did forſake the Lord. It is ſaid of him, he built high places for Aſhtaroth, 2 King. 23. 13. becauſe he did tolerate and give publick allowance, unto thoſe Idolatryes: and that ſin of his was the reaſon why the Lord ſtirred up Adverſaryes againſt him. Doe we not find that all the godly reforming Magiſtrates, ſpoken of in the Scripture, thought it their concern

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to pull down false worship, as well as to set up the true worship of God. It is a most vain objection which some have made, that we doe not read in the New Testament, that the Magistrate did ever punish any, on account of Transgression against the first Table. No more (saith *Calvin*) doe we read in the New Testament, that the Magistrate did ever punish men for murder, or other crimes, doth it therefore follow that he ought not so to doe? But therein it is said that they ought to punish all evill doers. Rom. 13.4. 1. Tim. 1.9. And that Transgressions against the first Table are evill deeds, Gal. 5.19.20. Phil. 3.2. 2. Joh. 10,11. And the holy Apostle wished those false Teachers, who disturbed the peace of the Churches in Galatia cut off. Gal. 5.12. Some judicious Authors conceive [b] that he wilheth there had been a christian Magistrate in the world to take such a course with those seducing spirits as they deserved. Moreover, unfull Toleration is an evil of exceeding dangerous consequence. Men of corrupt minds, though they may plead for Toleration, and cry up liberty of Conscience, &c. yet if once they should become numerous, and get power into their hands, none would persecute more than they: So the Donatists [c] of old, and the Germane Anabaptists [*] in the last age. And the *Arminian Remonstrants* [+] in the Netherlands made hideous clamours for liberty of Conscience, and that the States of Holland were more cruel than the bloody Spanish Inquisitors, yet when they became potent, they did persecute the Orthodox Professors of the Truth. And indeed the *Toleration* of all Religions and Perswasions, is the way to have no true Religion at all left. That was *Julian* the Apostate his device, in order to an extirpation of Christianity. And it is a solemn word which Mr. Cotton (the first and famous Teacher in this Congregation)

speak

speaketh, [d] *I wish* (saith he) *that Antichrist doe not creep in at the back door of Toleration.* I doe believe that Antichrist hath not at this day a more probable way to advance his Kingdome of Darkness, then by a *Toleration* of all Religions and Perswasions. Hence some of the chief of the Popish Doctors [e] have written against the Magistrates power in matters of Religion. But remember I pray you, how God hath punished this sin which I am testifying against. Of old (as some [f] have truly observed) when once the Romane Emperours did indulge and tolerate *Arrians*, God was provoked to let the barbarous *Goths* loose to break in upon the Empire and destroy it, so as that the Church fled into the wilderness, had like to have been swept away with that flood. And what misery this sin hath more then once brought upon our own Land and Nation, I need tel you. It is a very memorable passage, which I find related in the life of that great learned *Usher*; when Popish Idolaters were by the Civil State allowed, Well (said that Worthy of his time) you shall find that God will punish you forty years hence by those very men, whom you have sinfully indulged: and so it came to pass; for just forty years after that was the Irish Rebellion. This very sin which God calleth me to bear witness against this day, hath been subversive to the interest of Religion in some Christian Nations. The Toleration of *Socinianisme* hath proved the ruin of the Churches in *Poland* and *Transilvania*. Yet it is far from my design in speaking this, to stir up Magistrates to that which the Scripture calls *Persecution*: it were better to cure by too much

d. *Mr. Cottons blow Tenent washed*, p.19[illegible]

e. *Sic Becanus, Mariana, Harding contra Jewellum. Hart in Rainoldum. Sic Bozzius et Rossæus, quos vide citat apud Keckerm. in pol.* p.983. *et Paraum. Rom.* 13.

f. *Mr. Strong Sel. Sermons*, p.263. 264.

indulgence towards those that have the root of the matter in them, than by too much severity. Nay, as to those that are indeed Heretical, I can for my own part say with Luther, *Ad judicium sanguinis tardus sum*, I have no affection to sanguinary punishments in such cases. And certainly there are other wayes to suppress Hereticks besides *Hereticide*, witness what was done by great *Constantine* for the suppression of *Arrianisme*. Nevertheless, approved writers who are large enough in the point of *Toleration*, declare, that they, the principles of whose Religion are disturbant, to the civil State and Constitution of any place, may not be indulged, (and that therefore Popish Priests and Jesuits are not to be permitted) sure then they whose Religion, and whose Profession doth warm in its bowels, a fatal Engine, against the Kingdome and Churches of the Lord Jesus, ought not to be tolerated. Nor is it tolerable, for any sort of men amongst us, to set up a Mount *Gerizzim*, that if these or those are *Justly* cast out of the Churches of Christ they shall be suffered to set up an Altar against the Lords Altar, and (it may be) to take those hands that are in the Name of the Lord Jesus delivered up to Satan, I say, to take those hands to administer [+] the *dreadful mysteries* of the Kingdome, it is an abomination enough to make desolate. Certainly (much honoured in the Lord) if your blessed Fathers, and Predecessors were alive, and in place, it would not be so; If *Winthrop*, [+] *Dudley*, *Endicot* were upon the Bench, such profaneness as this would soon be suppressed. And if it be so, that the Spirit of Rulers in New-England is changed, if you do become cold and indifferent in the things of God, departing from your former love, and zeal for the Name, Truth, and

e Sr. Simond D'Ewes s Primitive Practice r preserving Truth. 6,7.

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bleſſed Ordinances of the Lord Jeſus, I will be bold to ſpeak to you, as once Mr. *Brightman* ſaid, to a greater man then any of you all, *if it be ſo*, you may believe it, that God will *change* either *you*, or your Government *ere long*. I ſpeak it to you with great ſolemnity of Spirit, and in the Name of him that is higher then the higheſt.

4. *Labour (I likewiſe pray you in the Name of the Lord) to the utmoſt of your power, that the work of Reformation may be promoted in this Generation.* I ſhall not need to inſiſt here, becauſe this Argument was abundantly and worthily enlarged on [g] by him that ſpake in the Name of the Lord on this occaſion three years agoe. Since that, the holy diſpenſations of God towards this People have been very dreadful, ſo that the Lord calls for Reformation, now more then ever. If things ſhould paſs away thus, and the Generation that is to come ſhould not ſee, that ſome notable thing was done with reſpect to a Reformation of provoking evils, it would be ſad indeed; and the more ſad, in that there have been *Eſſays* this way, and ſince the late (and to this day not fully ended) *Warr*, a Committee appointed by the general Court to enquire into the cauſes of the high diſpleaſure of God, which hath been manifeſted, and ſuch and ſuch evils, concluded to be matters of provocation, and Laws enacted for the ſuppreſſion of them, & ſhall it all come to juſt nothing at laſt? ſhall we dare to dally with the Almighty in things of this nature? The Lord may reſpite us for a while, but except there be a Reformation of provoking evils, we have no Reaſon to expect otherwiſe, but that a *worſe thing will come unto us*, & that he will puniſh us yet ſeven times for our ſins. And how is there like to be that Reformation which the Lord requireth, except you that are Leaders over this People, do your utmoſt to pro-

[g] *Mr. Torrey's Elect. Ser.*

more it? where do you read of any great and general Reformation brought to pass, except the civil Magistrate did forward it? It is true, that many times God doth make use of his Messengers and Ministers to set the Wheel a going, but then Magistrates have fallen in with them. The Prophets *Haggai* and *Zachary* set the work of Reformation upon the Wheel, but *Zerubbabel* and *Shealtiel* (godly Magistrates) carryed on the work to Effect, Ezra. 5. 1, 2. *Luther* began the Reformation in Germany, yet if some of the Princes there, had not engaged with him, the work had never been carryed on with such success. *Calvin* (and other eminent Ministers of God) exhorted the People at *Geneva*, unto Reformation, but if the Senators of that place had not hearkened to the voice of God in those Exhortations, the People would have remained unreformed still. *Zwinglius* by his Ministry was instrumental towards the accomplishing a great Reformation in *Zwick*, but then the Magistrates of that place fell in with the Word of God. *Oecolampadius* was an happy Instrument in the hand of Christ to reform *Basil*; but if the Magistrates of that City had not set to their helping hand, *Oecolampadius* alone might have laboured in vain. The like is to be said concerning the Reformation of *Bern*, (not to insist on more Instances) where that learned *Haller* was once a preacher of the Gospel. I know you cannot change mens hearts, yet you may do much (if God help you) towards the effecting an outward Reformation, which will procure outward blessings and prevent outward Judgements and [illegible]. There is pride in the hearts of men, you cannot reform that, but there is pride in Apparel which the Lord hath said he will punish for, you may call that to be reformed. There is drunkenness in the sight of God, which doth not fall under your Cognizance, but

Drunkenness in the sight of men, and the occasions of it, do; which you may and ought to remove. I know not any evil, that hath brought more misery upon this generation then that hath, and some that have Reason to know it, have told me that there hath been more Drunkenness amongst the Indians, since this war, then there was before; undoubtedly there is a fault somewhere, that good Laws are not executed upon those that shall transgress in this kind, and that the course propounded and enacted by the general Court, for the suppressing of this growing evil hath not been duly attended. Again, as for scandalous Contentions, you may do much towards the healing of them. All the world knoweth, that there hath been an unhappy breach between two of the Churches in this great Town. If every one of you that are in place, shall do what you can, and what the Lord Jesus would have you do, to help in this case, we may hope that wofnl breach will (by the help of Christ) soon be healed, and much sin and Judgement that is otherwise like to follow, will be prevented. And the Lord calls aloud about this matter; The burning which he hath kindled in this place, the voice of the Lord in it is, *cut with your sinful fires, lest I give you burning for burning.* And since that, this Town hath been endangered more by fire then ever it was since the day I knew it. Therefore I come to you in the Name of the Lord, and beseech you to consider of this matter, lest the Lord kindle another fire in *Pastor* [illegible] that shall burn to the Foundation of the Mountains. And I do the rather mention this thing, because the Subject I am upon, leads me to it, the welfare of Posterity being concerned therein, it may be the sowre grapes which the Fathers have eaten will set your Children's teeth on edge. I (b) remember [illegible] Mr. Burroughs in his *Irenicum* taketh [illegible]

(b) *Mr. Burroughs*

tice of it, that *it is very dangerous for the Children of the Church to be brought up in the sight of Divisions amongst Professors*. Was there not a young man that came to a lamentable end in this Country, [+] who professed that the Divisions which he observed amongst godly men, had occasioned his ruine? Let us remember that Scripture, Jer. 32. 39. I will give them *one heart* to fear me, *for the good* of them, *and of their Children after them*. If there be a divided heart among Christians, and these Divisions appear openly; it is a wrong to their Children after them. The Lord help us to consider of it.

[+] *Abraham Warner in Hartford.*

And now I shall turn my speech from you that are *Zerubbabels* amongst this People: I doubt not but you consider that I have spoken these things, not as a friend only, but as in the Capacity of an unworthy Ambassador of the most high God unto you this day. And methinks my Conscience bears me witness in the holy Ghost, that an earnest desire that the will of God might be done, hath caused me thus to express my self; As also a desire that you might have comfort both now and in *that day* when you must give up your account to the Son of God, concerning your Stewardship, which in his Providence he hath entrusted you with; and that your names might be honourably spoken of in the next Generation, when you shall be in your graves. It is no honour to Jehu's name that *in his dayes God began to cut Israel short*, 2 Kings 10. 32. nor to Jehoram in that it is recorded to Posterity, that *in his dayes the Edomites revolted*, 2 Chron. 21. 8. Nor will it be for your honour, if the next Generation shall say, once such and such Worthies and Patriots had the management of affairs in *New-England*, and in their dayes things went well, God did bless and build, and prosper the Land, but after they re-

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gone, the work fell into other hands, and *in their dayes* there was trouble upon trouble, wars, ficknesses, Sword, Fire, desolations in every corner of the Land, for it (thus to be spoken) would not be for your honour. But now that it should be said, though the Lord afflicted the Land for a while, you caused the People under your charge to turn unto the Lord, & then God did own them, and bless them more then ever, this will be to your honour amongst men in this world, and more to your joy when you shall appear before Jesus Christ, then if Crowns of Diadems should be set upon your heads. The Lord grant it may be so.

2. Let me humbly propose this Exhortation to those that are Ministers in the house of God. There are many such before the Lord in this great Assembly. My Fathers, and Brethren, the Generation that is present, and that which is to come, will bless God for us, if we do our utmost to promote their welfare; We are many of us eminently *the Children of the Prophets.* The Prophets do they live for ever; and our Fathers where are they? they are now in Heaven beholding the glory of Jesus Christ; And the Lord Jesus who sometimes said to the Angels of the Churches, *I know your works*, speaketh to us saying, the great affairs of my Kingdome, which once were in the hands of your Fathers to manage, are now come into your hands, they were faithful to my Name, and did acquit themselves as became them, now let me see what you will do. Follow them as they followed Christ. Give me leave to mention two or three words, which if the Lord help us to remember them, we shall serve our Generation according to the will of God.

1. *Let us approve our selves faithful in what concerns the house of God.* And therefore we ought to be care-

ful, who are admitted there. Though others are also concerned therein, yet in a more peculiar manner, *that matter belongs to us.* We are in respect of sacred Office relation before the Lord, Porters that have the charge of his house; & we are solemnly charged, Ezek. 44.7. (it is a Scripture that concerns Ministers of the New-Testament) not to bring into the Lords Sanctuary, uncircumcised in heart, to be in the Sanctuary to pollute it, and to eat the bread of God there. Indeed as for those whom God hath admitted into his house (in any degree) by any Rule of his, we must not turn them out till the Lord do it. But that which I intend, is the admission of persons into full Communion, we know what our Fathers have taught concerning that matter, *viz.* that there ought to be an holding forth Faith and Repentance before admission to the Lords Table. And it is well said by blessed Mr. *Mitchel* [i] that laxness in that point, would be a real departure from our former Profession; yet I wish there be not Teachers found in our Israel, that have espoused loose, large Principles here, designing to bring all persons to the Lords Supper, who have an Historical Faith, and are not scandalous in life, although they never had Experience of a work of Regeneration on their Souls, and live in the neglect of secret duties, wherein the life and power of godliness especially consists. Now this would corrupt Churches, and ruine all in a little time, The neglect [k] of this principle of Truth, that such members of the Church, as are admitted to full Communion ought to be Regenerate, converted persons, the non attendance unto that did (as a worthy Divine of our own hath well noted) lay the Foundation to great Apostasy, which the Christian Church hath been long subject unto. Again, if we would be faithful as to what concerns the house of God, we must endeavour

deavour that the building thereof be carried on to perfection: As David in this Context speaks to Solomon, *Take heed now, for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for a Sanctuary, be strong and doe it.* So hath the Lord been pleased to chuse us to be employed in building his house, which hath not been carried on to the desired perfection. Our Fathers did like David, He prepared Materials for the Temple, and then left it to his Son to goe on with the Building: So did our Fathers, leave us Principles of Truth, which they did with much cost and pains, dig out of the rich veins of the Scripture. We have need therefore to be much in Prayer, and Humiliations before the Lord, that so he might vouchsafe to shew us the form of the House, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof.

2. *Let us make Converting work our main Design.* Shall we be content to goe to heaven alone, and not strive to carry as many of the Generation we live in, along with us as possibly we can? Alas Apostacy will prevail, and these Churches cannot be kept pure long, except converting work goe forward. O therefore let us preach for this, and pray for this, & study for this, that precious immortal Souls may be converted to God through Jesus Christ. And to this end it will be good for us to attend personal instruction of those under our charge, as far time as & strength will permit us. I remember it is noted in the lives of *Chrysostom* and *Austin*, that besides their publick Labours, they did sometimes attend personal Instruction of these and those of their hearers. When the * Ministers in *Geneva* did agree to divide the City, so as to call each Family to an account concerning their Faith: more good was done thereby then by all their publick Teachings. And some [/] of latter time have

* *Refe tur in v Calvin. [/] r M Joseph leins Hi with M Bannerg Preface Ames C Cons. c.2*

been blessed with eminent success, as to the Conversion of Souls, so as that whole Towns where they have lived have been wonderfully changed, upon taking this course. I know that where there is but one Elder in a Church (as alas that is now the case of these Churches generally) so much cannot be done that way as is to be desired; yet if we doe as much as we can, the Lord Jesus will accept of it; and it may be, success will be beyond expectation. Many an one that minds not a Sermon, yet when he is by a Messenger of God particularly spoken to, and told, you are yet in your sins: if you be not new born, better you had never been born; he falls down under conviction. And possibly words that we little think any such thing of now, will be mentioned again to our exceeding joy and rejoycing in the day of Christ when we shall see and hear many Souls stand forth and bless the Lord Jesus that ever they knew us, & that ever we spake to them in the Name of the Lord both publickly and privately; even in the day when each of us that hath been faithfull in his Generation, shall say, *Lord here am I, and the Children that thou hast given me.* Moreover, if we would convert Souls, and be blessings indeed to this Generation, it concerns us to be very careful of our personal Conversation, & what examples we set before others. If we doe not live Sermons as well as preach them, we are not likely to doe any great good. For a Minister of Christ [m] to be a Merchant, and entangle himself with the affairs of this life, against the express charge of the Holy Ghost; or for them to be Gospel Lawyers, to handle the *Code* instead of the *Bible*

[m] See Dr. Tuckney on Exod. 36. P. 429. And Fuller, Holy State, p. 268. And Greenham Exod. 42. p. 334. And Dod in his Discourse on that Question, how far a Minister of the Gospel may ingage himself in civil affairs.

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and study the Statutes of the Land, instead of the Statutes of Heaven; for them to appear as Advocates, and plead Causes in civil Courts of Judicature, it is very uncomely. One of the Ancients observeth, *Ierom.* that *Sacerdos in Foro, et Mercator in Templo* is not to be tolerated. Certainly such Preachers are not likely to be instruments of turning many to Righteousness. Much more doe they hinder the Conversion of Souls, that shall call themselves Ministers of Christ, and yet be of a scandalous Conversation. When the Prophets of Jerusalem are light Persons, Profaneſs goeth forth into all the Land. I have read somewhere of one that was grievously tempted to Atheism on this account: For (said that poor creature) I live under a Minister that will preach good Sermons, but his conversation is not according thereunto, he will be drunk sometimes, and secretly vile and lascivious, and therefore how can I believe that there is any God or Devil, or heaven or hell, or any such thing? An evill Example in such an one, is enough to make those of the Generation amongst whom he liveth to become Atheists.

3. *Oh! that our occasional Meetings might be improved for the good of this, and after Generations.* Because of the capacity and holy Relation we stand in before the Lord, it is expected we should not be like other men, they may meet together, and spend that time in discourses of their own personal concerns; but we have the care and charge of Souls committed to us. Yea (in our measure) the care of all the Churches ought to be upon us: nay, more, we must be solicitous for those that shall come after us. Such a publick spirit well becometh our publick capacity, & therefore upon all occasions to speak and act accordingly. And verily, the Lord will write down these discourses in his book of Remembrance, and we

shall be glad to hear of them again *at that day*, we must every one of us, (Ministers as well as People) appear in a greater Congregation than this, and then we shall not be sorry, that we have laid our selves out for God & for his People; yea, the more we have done for Christ, and for the Generation wherein we live, the greater will our glory be, when we shall hear the Lord Jesus saying, Well done thou faithfull Servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. If the Lord help us to approve our selves faithfull unto the Death, when he the chief Shepherd shall appear, he will give unto us a Crown of Glory which fadeth not away.

Let me in the last place, direct my speech and Exhortation in the Name of the Lord, unto the people of this Land. There are here present those that are *Deputed* to act in the name and stead of the people of this Jurisdiction. You have a great opportunity put into your hands by the providence of God, to doe service for this and after Generations, *viz.* by endeavouring the establishment of righteous and religious Laws in the Common-wealth, that so the Lord Jesus might reign there. Especially, let me propound to you, that you would take some effectual course, that good Laws which are already established, may be duly executed. And that some further care might be taken for the suppressing of that wickedness that is usually committed the night after the Sabbath. God hath lately kindled a fire in this place, and it was on the night after the Sabbath, why should we wonder at it? I cannot speak it without some anguish of Spirit, there is more wickedness committed usually on that night then in all the week besides. Therefore think of some expedient to help in this case. Let me also mention another thing to you, I have form-

ly upon a solemn occasion mentioned it to the Honoured Magistracy, and therefore now apply myself to you; it is this, that you would recommend unto the Churches in this Colony a solemn renewal of their Covenant with God and one another. That is a great Scripture expedient for Reformation. Do not think that this is any new notion, but it is a known Principle owned and avowed by [o] the good old non-Conformists, (whose Children we are) *That renewal of Covenant is the way to attain Church Reformation*, which Principle was much improved by the chief of the Fathers, of these New-English Churches, (and therefore I the rather insist upon it) this is the way to prevent Apostasy. The Covenant was renewed in the dayes of Joshua, when as the Scripture testifyeth, that in his dayes the Children of Israel continued to serve the Lord, wherefore Divines observe, that Joshuahs special designe in putting the People upon renewing their Covenant, was that so they might be kept from future Apostaly. I do therefore in the Name of the Lord, commend this matter to you, and leave it with you, and God incline your hearts to do that which shall be pleasing in his sight. And if the Lord intend not further shakings and desolations amongst these Churches, I am perswaded that this motion will be hearkned unto, and complyed with. Moreover, there are many others of the People of the Land here, before the Lord this day, a considerable part of the present Generation is met together in this great Assembly; a few words let me speak to you, and [illegible] with you, that so you may not forsake the Lord God of your Fathers.

[o] Cartwright, Parker, Ames, &

Let us labour to be rightly informed respecting Principles which our Fathers owned. There are mistakes in the minds of some, who think that the Fathers of this Colony, affirmed thus and so, albeit, it was far from

from them, so to teach, or so to think, I shall not (being now in earnest, and desirous to speak with utmost solemnity) enter upon things which are more Controversal amongst us, but certain it is, that our Fathers alwayes owned and avowed this Principle of Truth, *that nothing should be admitted into the worship of God but what there is Scripture warrant for, nor any thing neglected which the Lord hath instituted.* The cause of the second Commandment was that which our Fathers were ingaged in the defence of. And as to Church Administrations, *that things should be reduced to the Primitive, Apostolical pattern.* An excellent principle, albeit, that blessed Martyr, Mr. *Laurence Saunders* was accused of Heresy for asserting it. And I remember that great learned man and blessed Martyr *Peter Ramm*, professeth in one of his Epistles, that the deep consideration of this Principle, [p] *that the Apostolical Age was the golden Age of the Church, and that things should be regulated according to what was then practised in the Churches of Christ*, caused him to become a Protestant; yea, and for the *Congregational way* of Church Government. And indeed *the Congregational way truly stated*, is that which our Fathers have stedfastly owned and avowed, that is to say, as it is held forth in the platform of Discipline, and by Mr. *Cotton* in his Book of the Keyes; they were not for Presbyterianisme, nor yet for Brownisme. Remember blessed Mr. *Nortons* last words, in this place and under this Roof.

[p] Vide Petri Ramm Epist. Cardi- Lothagum p. 6,257.

2. *Keep up the power of Discipline in Churches.* When Apostasy prevailed, in the Asiatick Churches there was the original wound. They did not brandish the Sword of Discipline, which is Christs own expedient, and appointment, for the preservation of Churches in purity; yea, this was a fatal neglect, which by degrees proved ruinous to those once famous

mous and glorious Churches. Some learned men [q] have well observed, that the neglect of Discipline in the Churches of Asia brought in corruption of manners, and corruption of manners was (through the just revenging hand of God) attended with corruption of Doctrine, and these together provoked the Lord, to lay those Churches most desolate. And as for the Children of the Covenant let Discipline be extended towards them, according as they are Subjects capable thereof. Did not our Fathers come hither in hope that they should leave their Children, under the Discipline and Government of the Lord Jesus in his Church? Hath not Christ owned the application of solemn publick Admonitions, &c. to some of them that have been Children of the Church, (though not in full Communion) even so as to convert their Souls thereby? why then should disputes about the mode wholly evacuate the thing, when so much of the welfare of Souls, and the Interest of Christs Kingdome is concerned therein

[q] *Voetius alicubi inter disputationes.*

3. *Look to your Families.* Families are the Nurceryes for Church and Common-wealth, ruine Families, and ruine all. Order them well and the publick State will fare the better; the great wound and misery of *New-England* is that Familes are out of Order. As to the generality of householders, Family Government is lost, & gone; Servants do not fear their Masters, Children do not honour their Parents, in that respect the *English* are become like unto the *Indians*. Let Christians make conscience of it as their duty, to rule their own-houses well, and be careful that Family Instruction be upheld; the Judgements of God should awaken to this. In some Families the Children have no Father left to instruct them, in other Families Fathers have no Children left to be instructed by them, by these terrible Judgements

Read M. Stockton of Fam. Instruct.

they

they that have Familyes, should learn to be diligent in Instructing of them, whilst they have an opportunity so to do; And this is the way to prevent Apostasy, for ignorance is the mother (not of devotion but) of Heresy. Vsually, they that prove Hereticks, are such as were never well grounded in the knowledge of Principles, never well instructed in Catechetical Fundamental Doctrines and points of Religion. The *Waldenses* [y] preserved and propagated the Interest of Religion by diligence, in catechising their Children. When certain *Jesuits* were sent amongst them to entice them from the Truth to Idolatry, they returned amazed, professing that Children of seven years old amongst those *Waldenses* knew more in the Scripture, and of the Mysteries of the Gospel, then many of their learned Doctors did. Take heed also how you dispose of your Children, you that are Parents look at Religion and the fear of God, in disposing of your Children. That blessed man Mr. *Dod* (the Moses of his time) would sometimes bewail it, that Professors of Religion would say, *there is a portion & Civility, & we will hope for grace; but* (said he) *rather make sure of grace, and hope for riches, there is far greater Reason for it, since Godliness hath the Promises, riches have none.* It may make us dread to think what's coming, in that it is with us, as it was with the old world, the Sons of God are marrying with the daughters of men. Church members in disposing of their Children look more at portion then at piety. If their Children are like to live well in the world, and their Familyes to be made richer, they look no further; a sad sign that Religion will expire, and such Familyes be cut off from the Covenant, within a few Generations, and the branches thereof perish for ever.

y Read Hist. the Waldenses.

4. *Pray with all manner of prayer and supplication in the Spirit.* Pray as sometimes the Martyr did, *Lord*

&c.

do not thou forsake me, lest I forsake thee. Pray for your poor Children and Posterity, as David did for his Son Solomon, 1 Chron. 29. 19. *give unto my Son Solomon a perfect heart.* He did not only exhort & charge his Son to labour after such an heart, but earnestly prayed to God, that such an heart might be given to him. And truly, if there were more prayers poured forth before the Lord, for the conversion of *the Rising Generation*, we may hope that there would a blessed Effect follow. I have been told that there is a Church in *New-England*, that hath set dayes apart only to seek unto the Lord, for converting grace to be vouchsafed to their children. O that all other Churches would do as they have done, even seek unto the Lord by Fasting and Prayer, for a poor, perishing, dying, unconverted Generation.

5. Lastly, *Be faithful in improving of your Civil Libertyes.* Beware of two extreams, of an *Issacharian Spirit*, to couch under every Imposer: if you foolishly lose your Libertyes, your Posterity, yes, the children that are yet to be born will rue it. Beware also of a *wanton Spirit*, lest you provoke the Lord, by bitter bondage to make you know the worth of Liberty. It is a great priviledge which you enjoy this day, that you may chuse Rulers from amongst your selves. And although as to what concerns the Transactions of this day, it is almost too late to speak, yet you may *bear for the time to come.* Freemen remember the Oath of God that is upon you. I doubt there is lamentable [illegible] upon many, who in *Elections* are acted more by [illegible]rest and Faction, then by Conscience. You know [illegible] the Rule is, *viz.* that you should chuse men that [illegible] Just and that fear God, and that hate Covetous[illegible]. Chuse men that shall approve themselves [illegible] Eliakim) Fathers to the Inhabitants of Jerusa[illegible], chuse men of Hezekiahs Spirit, who *spake* [illegible]

ſortably to all thoſe that taught the good knowledge of the Lord. In a word, chuſe thoſe that will be zealous for the Intereſt of Reformation, and that therefore will improve their power, to ſuppreſs tranſgreſſions of the firſt, as well as of the ſecond Table. If you will chuſe ſuch (which mercy forbid that ever it ſhould be) under whoſe ſhadow thorns and bryars ſhall thrive, and thoſe weeds of pride, contention, Hereſy ſhall receive nouriſhment, and encouragement; It will be an ominous ſign, that God will ere long, deprive you of your Libertyes, until ſuch time as you know better how to improve them. And now I hope I may ſay, that as to the opportunity put into my hands, this day, I have diſcharged my Conſcience, delivered my Soul, and can lay down my head with peace. I conclude with *Moſes*, calling Heaven and Earth to Record, that life and death hath been ſet before this Generation. O Generation ſee the Word of the Lord, chuſe life, that both thou and thy Seed may live. And God from Heaven ſaith, O that there were ſuch an heart in this Generation that they would fear me, that ſo it may go well with them, and with their Children for ever, *Amen*!

Tibi Domine:

Etc

ECCLES. XII. I.

Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy Youth.

SOlomon in this Context doth apply himself to speak unto Young men, whom he doth, 1. Dehort. 2. Exhort.

His Dehortation is in the two last verses of the former Chapter. And it is 1. Ironically propounded, *v.* 9. *Rejoyce oh young man in thy Youth, &c.* It is such another form of speech as that of the Prophet unto Ahab, 1 King. 22. 15. *Goe and prosper.* [a] He saw that Ahab was set upon his design, & therefore by way of *Irony* bids him goe, and see what would come of it. Thus Solomon here, I see Young man (saith he) that thou art resolved to follow thy pleasures and vanityes, whatever the event shall be, Doe so, and see what will come of it. Wherefore he addeth, *Walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes.* This is expresly forbidden elsewhere in the Scripture [b] A cleer evidence that the wise man here speaketh by way of holy derision, & thence [illegible] further added, *Know thou that for these things God will [illegible] thee to judgement.* q. d. Though its possible thou [illegible]ayest escape judgement from men, parents, [illegible]ates, &c. yet not from the Lord. 2. This [illegible]ation is plainly expressed in the Verse immediately preceding this Text. *Remove sorrow from thy* [illegible] The Hebrew word translated sorrow, signifi[illegible]nger: q. d. Beware of inordinate passions which young

[a] *Carwright Eccle.* 1 9.

[b] *Mercer in l. cum.*

young men are usually subject unto: *And put away evill from thy flesh*, i. e. avoid sinfull pleasures. Passions and sinfull pleasures are evills which young men are most in danger of being carried away by; therefore he doth in special caution them against iniquityes of that nature: withall adding this Reason, *for childhood and youth are vanity*, i. e. its soon gone, Thy time (young man!) to enjoy sinfull and sooliſh pleasures will soon be past and gone, it abideth not, therefore set not thy heart upon such things.

2. We have Solomons *Exhortation* unto young men in this verse. Wherein is expressed, 1. The act that ought to be done, *Remember*. 2. The Object, *thy Creator*, i. e. God, for he and he only is the Creator; since it requireth an Infinite power to be able to produce a work of Creation. Hebr. [*Boreeca.*] *Thy Creators*. Not that there are more Gods or more Creators then one; But there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead. Though the work of Creation be more especially ascribed to the Father, as Redemption to the Son, and Application to the Spirit, yet each of the persons in the sacred and eternal Trinity, doth concur therein.

3. The time or season, when this duty ought to be attended, is expressed, viz. *now in the dayes of thy youth*. not that they that are past the dayes of their youth may forget God, or be exempted from this remembrance of him, but young men are under special obligations and advantages to remember him.

Doctr. *That as it is the Duty of all, so more especially of young men, to remember God their Creator.* Remembring God may not be defetred untill old Age, but ought to be attended in the dayes of youth.

In the Doctrinal prosecution of this Truth, there are three things to be enquired into. 1. What is im-

plied

plyed in this Remembring? 2. How it doth appear that young men ought to remember God? 3. The Reason why they especially should doe so?

Quest. 1. *What is required in this Remembring which the Text speaks of?*

Answ. It is a known Rule, that in the Scripture words of Sense doe imply the affections and actions. So here, it is not every kind of Remembrance of God, but that which is affectionate and practical that is intended. Particularly,

1. *This Remembring doth imply a Turning to the Lord.* Psal. 22.27. *All the ends of the World shall remember, and Turn to the Lord.* Unfeigned Repentance is implyed in this Remembrance. Rev. 2.5. *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and Repent.* Ezek. 6.9. *They that escape of you shall Remember me among the Nations, &c.* They shall Repent and turn unto the Lord. And it is a penitential Remembrance which Solomon here speaketh of. Remember thy Creator, that is, Remember to make thy peace with him, and therefore to Repent of Sin, and turn to God in the dayes of thy Youth.

2. This Remembrance which the Text speaketh of, doth imply Service and Obedience. Psal. 119. 55. *I have remembred thy name, and have kept thy law.* As they that neglect the worship and Service which they owe to the blessed God, are said to forget him. Psal. 9.17. *The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God.* That is to say, they that doe not serve God. When the Children of Israel had forsaken the wayes, and corrupted the worship of God, it was said, *Israel hath forgotten his Maker.* Hos. 8.14. So on the other hand, the Service of God is noted by that of Remembring him. Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy Youth, *i.e.* Seek and serve him betimes. As David exhorted his Son So-

lomon, whilst yet in his Youth, 1 Chron. 28. 9. *Know, and serve the Lord with a perfect heart and a willing mind.* Hence the Performance of all religious dutyes, especially that great duty of Prayer, is implyed in this Remembring which the Text speaketh of. Jon. 2. 7. *I Remembred the Lord* (saith the Prophet) and how was that? it followeth, *my Prayer came unto thee, into thine holy Temple.* We read in the Gospel of Children that prayed unto the Lord, they said *Hosanna*, i.e. Save now we beseech thee. Math. 21. 15. That is implyed in Remembring God the Creator,

3. *It doth also imply frequent thoughts and Meditations of God*, Psal. 63. 6. *When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.* Where there is that Remembrance of God which the Text requireth, there are frequent holy Meditations on him day and night. As Solomon exherts, Prov. 23. 17. *Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.* Set God before thine eyes; wherever thou comest think of him, from morning unto night, ever and anon, let there be awfull holy thoughts in thy heart concerning the Omnipresence of God. And this is to Remember him. We come therefore to the second thing to be enquired into, *viz.*

Quest. 2. *How it doth appear that Young men ought to remember God?*

Ans. 1. The Lord doth require this, the commandment saith expresly. Luk. 10. 27. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.* If men are bound to serve God with their strength, then they must not forget him till those dayes are come wherein their strength is gone, and they able to doe him little service. Of old, God required that the first born and the first fruits should be given to him. Exod. 22. 29. *Thou shalt not de-*

offer the first of thy ripe fruit, the first born shalt thou give unto me. This did intimate that men ought to give the prime of their Age, the first and best of their strength unto the Lord.

2. The Truth of this Doctrine is evident, in that Parents are bound to teach their Children the fear of the Lord whilst they are young, Deut.6.6,7. *The words which I command thee, thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children.* Again, it is said, *Train up a Child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it*, Prov.22.6. To the same purpose is that of the Apostle, Eph.6.4. *Ye Fathers bring up your Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* And according unto this hath been the practice of Saints. The Lord himself doth testify concerning Abraham, that he would *command his Children to keep the wayes of the Lord*, Gen.18.19. And Solomon doth acknowledge that his Father David was careful to instruct him, and put him in mind of God, whilst he was yet in the dayes of his Youth, Prov.4.3,4. *I was my Fathers Son, he taught me, and I said unto me, let thine heart retain my words.* Yea, not only his Father, but his Mother also taught him the fear of the Lord, Prov. 31.1,2. *The words of King Lemuel, the Prophesy that his Mother taught him, what my Son! and what the Son of my womb! and what the Son of my vows!* Now to what end were it, to teach Children and young ones to fear the Lord, if they were not bound to learn and do accordingly.

3. Young men as well as others owe service unto God. He is their Creator as the Text expresseth. Now that one consideration hath great weight in it, to enforce duty and obedience. For certainly, all owe service unto him, from whom they have received their Beings, Psal.95.6. *O come let us worship, and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.* He hath

hath made all for himself; from him and for him are all things. He as Creator hath given unto men reasonable Souls, in respect whereof, they are capable of knowing and serving the Lord: and he is able to destroy them: He that made them can destroy them; as it is said concerning that creature, *He that made him, can cause his sword to approach unto him*, Job 40.19 Therefore it concerns men to fear their Creator.

But to proceed to the third Particular, namely,

Quest. 3. *Why Young men especially ought to remember their Creator?*

For these amongst other Reasons,

Reas. 1. Because youth is the fittest season to remember God in, wherefore it is added in the Context, *before the evil dayes come, when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them*. Old age is an evil time: and therefore (saith the wise man) thou must Remember and serve God in thy good dayes, if thou wouldest have him to remember and accept of thee in thy evil dayes: if thou neglectest God in the spring of thy years, what reason is there to think that he will regard thee when winter Age is come upon thee? Moreover, it is not easy to Turn unto the Lord in old age: A young plant is more easily plucked up then an old tree; so are young men with less difficulty transplanted, and plucked up out of the Soyl of nature, then they that are grown old in the wayes of sin. Old Diseases are hardly cured: so when men by a long continuance in a course of sin, have contracted almost incurable habits of sin, how hard a work will it be to convert them? were it not that all things with God are possible, it could not be. Wherefore the Scripture saith, *Can the Æthiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may you also doe good, that are accustomed to doe evil*. Jer. 13.23. When Satan hath held possession a long time, it is not an easy work to cast him, and dispossess

disposses him. We read of one in the Gospel that had a most terrible dispossession, Mark 9.25,26. *Jesus rebuked the foul spirit, saying, I charge thee come out of him and enter no more into him; and the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him, and he was as one dead, insomuch that many said, he is dead.* How difficult and how painfull was this Dispossession? Why? v.21. It is noted that the Father of that young man being enquired of, how long he had been in that condition, he said, *Of a child.* Truly, they that spend their childhood in the Service of Satan, if ever they be converted, are wont to have dreadfull Conversions at last. Therefore Young men should turn to God betimes, that so they may escape those bitter pangs, which otherwise they must expect to undergoe if ever good come of them.

From the good and benefit which doth follow upon Remembring and Turning to God betimes: as it is said, Lam.3.27. *It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his Youth*: so it is good for a man to turn to God, and to put his neck under his yoke in his Youth. It was the Saying of one, that *if it were lawfull for him to envy the happiness of any, he would envy the happiness of those that turn to God betimes*, because they are freed from a world of sin and sorrow, which otherwise they would become subject unto. And this is the way to become eminent for God. There is a wretched Proverb in the world, viz. *That a young Saint will prove an old Devill.* I remember [c] *Erasmus* saith, the Devill was the Author of that Proverb: For nothing can be more contrary to the Scripture. The most eminent Saints that we read of there, were such as did Remember God in the dayes of their Youth. As now, Joseph proved an eminent good man: There

Reas.2

c. *In pietate Juvenis Angelicus Juvenis senibus satanis at in annis* v. Heidfeldii *sphin. Philos. p.395.*

is reason to think that all Jacobs Children were good men before they dyed, but none of them to be compared with Joseph: and though he were the youngest but one, yet it seemeth evident that he was converted before any of his Brethren who were older then he. Job was an eminent Saint, not a man upon the face of the whole earth so good as he; and Job was one that made Conscience of his wayes even from his Youth. Job 31.18. David was a man that attained a great measure of Grace before he dyed, and he was godly even from his Childhood. Therefore doth he speak as in Psal.71.5. *Thou art my hope O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth.* & again, v.17. *O God thou hast taught me from my Youth & hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.* So that David had Faith in Christ, and was savingly taught of God even from his Youth. Obadiah was an eminent Servant of God, and he could say, *I fear the Lord from my Youth.* 1.King.18.22. Josiah was eminent for God, and of him we read, that *while he was young he began to seek after the Lord God of David his Father.* He was truely converted when he was but fifteen years old. 2.Chr. 34.3. Timothy was an eminent Minister, & (as Ecclesiastical Story reports) at last he dyed a Martyr of Jesus Christ; now he was savingly acquainted with the holy Scriptures [*apo brephous*] *from a little child.* 2.Tim.3.15. Thus we see how God hath owned and blessed those that have Remembred their Creator in the daves of their Youth. And for that Reason Young men should Remember God.

Young men are subject to the stroke of Death as well as others, Job.21.23. *One dyeth in his full strength.* The young man of Naim whom Christ restored to life; notwithstanding his Youth, was subject to the stroke of Death, Luk.7.14. And Jairus his daughter was but about twelve years of Age, when [illegible]

and yet he fell down from an upper Chamber, and was taken up dead, Act. 20.9. were not Jobs Children young men? and yet they dyed suddenly. Was not Absalom a young man, and his brother Adonijah a young man when death surprized them? Did not Ely's Sons dye in the flower of their Age? 1 Sam. 2.33. Now if young men Remember their Creator so as to repent of sin, and make sure of an Interest in Christ before death cometh, then happy shall they be. As Jeroboams good Son, though he were a child he dyed; 1 King. 14.17. but inasmuch as in him there was found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel, death did him no hurt, only he was taken away from the evil to come, that his eyes might not behold the miserable ruine, that was coming upon his Fathers Family. But if death find a young man in his sins, in an unconverted, Christless estate, woe to him that ever he was born! His naked Soul must appear before God his Creator, and receive a Sentence of eternal Damnation.

I proceed therefore to apply this Truth, by way of *Exhortation. O let young men this day be exhorted in the Name and fear of God, to follow the counsel of the wise man, even to Remember their Creator in the dayes of their Youth.* All you young men that are here before the Lord, (and there are many such in this Assembly) hear me this day, that so God may hear you another day, *now* turn to the Lord, *now* repent of sin, and make sure of an Interest in Jesus Christ. And therefore lay to heart some motives and perswasives.

Consider, what special Reason they that are of the younger Rising Generation in New-England *have to Remember their Creator.* Now there is cause for it more then ever, in that there are so few that do so. Multitudes of young men are risen up in this Land, who have been forgetting God all their dayes; unto whom this

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Lord may say as Jer.22.21. *This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyest not my voice.* And as it was said, concerning them of old, *the Children of Israel, and the Children of Judah have only done evil before me from their Youth*, Jer.32.30. It is true, that there are some young ones that are Remembring, & turning to the Lord, which ought to be acknowledged to the praise of his glorious grace, yet it must be said with lamentation, that the generality of the Youth in this Land, walk in wayes of looſneſs, profaneneſs, pride, drinking, gaming, or in a careleſs neglect of God, and of their own Souls. Hence the Lord doth not ſeem to take pleaſure in many of the Youth of this Country. O it is a ſad word that is ſpoken, Iſai.9.17. *The Lord ſhall have no joy in their young men.* How many young men even in *New-England*, that have been cut off either by Sword or ſickneſs within theſe two years? now ſhall the Lord have cauſe to complain as he doth by the Prophet, (Amos 4.10.) *your young men have I ſlain with the Sword, yet have you not returned unto me.* Moreover, young men in this Country enjoy means of grace plentifully diſpenſed, God is calling from Heaven to them, and ſtriving with them, in the dayes of their youth, and therefore if they forget him, they will be left moſt inexcuſable before his Judgement Seat. Yea, and many are the Children of godly Parents, and in that reſpect under peculiar engagement to ſeek and ſerve the Lord, who is not only their Creator, but the God of their Fathers. Their God not only by right of Creation, but in reſpect of his holy Covenant.

2. Conſider, *How pleaſing it will be to the Lord if you do indeed Remember him in the dayes of your Youth*, Jer.2.2. *I remember the kindneſs of thy Youth*, &c. You heard but now, how the Lord is pleaſed with the fruits of *Abel* brought of the firſtlings of his

the Lord had respect to Abel and his offering, Gen. 14. 4. we read also, how the Lord chose the Almond Tree, Numb. 17. 8. now that's the first Tree that blossoms. The fruit of it is ripe in the Spring; [d] yea, (as writers affirm) in the first moneth of the year. So when young men shall bring forth the fruit of Repentance, Faith, and holiness, that pleaseth the Lord. He hath a special delight in young men who truly fear and serve him, Hos. 11. 1. *When Israel was a Child then I loved him*: One of the Antients observeth that Christ loved his youngest Disciple best. John was the beloved Disciple, and he is reported to be younger at his first calling, then any of the Disciples of the Lord Jesus. And we find in the Scripture how the Lord blessed little Children when they came to him, or were brought to him, Mar. 10. 13, 14, 16. *They brought young Children to him, and when Jesus saw it, he said, suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not.---and He took them up in his Arms, and blessed them.* You young ones hearken, would you not have the Son of God to bless you, O come to him, now in the dayes of your Youth, and he will surely bless you, for his Armes are open to receive you. And such are the special Subjects of a gracious promise, Prov. 8. 17. *They that seek me early shall find me.* If you will be perswaded to seek the Lord whilst it is yet *early dayes* with you, Christ hath promised, that you shall find him, and everlasting Life and happiness by him.

Consider the danger of neglecting God in the dayes of Youth. It may be it will cost thee thy life, yea, the

[d] *The Hebrew word for Almond Tree is* Shéked, *which cometh from a Verb signifying make hast, Jer. 1. 11. because that Tree above all others maketh haste to bear fruit.* Flos omnium primus Amygdalus Mense Januario Martio vel pomum maturat. *Bochart. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. Druf. Miscell Cent. 1. c. R. Kimchi in verbo* Shak

life of thy Soul for ever. Who knoweth but that the Time of Youth is the only time which the Lord will allow you to repent, and make your peace with God in, through Jesus Christ? If these golden dayes be loſt, probably thou wilt be undone for ever. I muſt needs tell you, that for the moſt part it is ſo, that men are either converted in youth or not at all. We read but of one that was called at the eleventh hour. If a Tree do not bloſſome in the Spring, it is commonly dead all the year after. So they that are not converted in the Spring of their Age, are rarely converted at all. Now and then one is converted in old Age, but ſuch Examples are exceeding rare, Eſpecially, it is true with reſpect unto thoſe that have in the dayes of their youth lived under the means of grace, heard many Sermons, experienced frequent ſtrivings of the Spirit of God with their hearts, if they remain unconverted until the dayes of their Youth are paſt and gone, the Lord uſually giveth them up to Judicial hardneſs of heart, that they ſhall never be converted, never ſaved. Young men think ſadly of it in the fear of God.

2. *Conſider, what Examples have been ſet before you, of early Converſions.* Have you not read or heard of thoſe that have turned to God in the dayes of their Youth? nay, that in their Childhood, the fear of God hath been planted in their hearts, that they have no ſooner began to have the uſe of Reaſon, but one might diſcern ſigns and effects of grace in their ſouls. There is a [e] Book which many of you have in your houſes, that giveth an account of thirteen Children, the eldeſt of them not above fourteen years old, ſome of them but ſeven years old, ſome not ſo much, that nevertheleſs it was evident that the fear of God and unfeigned love to Jeſus Chriſt was wrought in their hearts. And there is a printed Relation of [f] a

Child that dyed not long since in this Country, who for several years before his death, had his heart changed and was made a new Creature. O how may this shame many young ones that are here before the Lord this day, who yet are older then that Child was, it may be fifteen years old, nay, perhaps twenty years old; and for all that, in a natural, Christless Estate to this day. Lamentable is thy condition, that hast lived so long under means of grace, and yet continuest an unconverted Creature. God be merciful to thee, and help thee to think of it.

5. *Consider you have a great work to doe before you go out of this world, & but a little time to doe it in.* As young as you are, you have much sin to repent of, and to obtain the pardon of, Original sin thou art guilty of, and that must be mortified. And who can declare how many actual sins thou hast committed in words, thoughts, and deeds, that have been evil? and all those to repent of, and endeavour that they may be mortified: and but little time to be attending works of this nature: for what is your life? It is but a vapor that appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away. Jam. 4. 14. If a man have a long journey to goe in a winters day, he had need set out betimes. Thou hast a long journey to goe: Is it not a long journey from earth to heaven? and but a winters day to dispatch this journey. When once the short day of thy life is expired, then it will be too late. There is no work in the Grave whether thou art going. O then up betimes, be going, be doing, and the Lord be with thee.

By way of Direction.

1. *Beware of those sins especially which they that are* [illegible] *Childhood and Youth are most subject unto, and are* [illegible] *carried away from God by.* 2. Tim. 2. 22. *Flee youthful lusts*, i.e. those sins which Youth is mostly expo-

fed unto. It is infinite mercy to be kept pure from the corruptions of Youth. If ever you should find grace to repent of the sins of Youth, and so to obtain the pardon of them, yet they will be bitterness and shame to you all your dayes. Those vanityes of Youth, which now thou art so foolish as to delight in, it may be they will be a trouble to thee forty years hence, should'st thou live so long. Doth not Job complain saying, *Thou makest me to possess the iniquityes of my youth*. Job.13.26. And did not holy David pray, as in Psal.25.7. *Remember not the sins of my youth*. And doth not converted Ephraim make an humble confession concerning the sins of Youth, Jer.31.19. *I was ashamed, yea even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my Youth*. So it is, that the remembrance of the sins & vanityes of Youth, are matter of reproach & shame a long time after: yea the very thought of them doth fill the soul that is truly converted, with an holy confusion of face. Beware then of the sins of Youth. To instance in some particulars, Pride is a sin that young ones are very much under the power of: hence we see that young people are strangly addicted to vanity in Apparel: Proud fashions they must and will follow, there's no perswading them to the contrary: but beware of that sin. So for stubbornesse and disobedience to Superiours, it is an evill that Youth is very subject unto. You that are Servants, young men and maids that are here before the Lord, have not you been guilty of stubborn, disobedient carriage towards your Masters? though God in his word tels you that you ought to be obedient to them with fear and trembling, Eph.6.5. And you that are Children, have not you disobeyed your Parents? Thou hast been disobedient to thy Father sometimes, but especially to thy Mother. Thy heart may ake to think what is like to come of these sins

repent not speedily, Did you ever know any dye upon the Gallows, but they confessed they had been guilty of this sin, and thereby provoked the Lord to leave them unto those things which have brought them to untimely, unhappy ends? And this is but according to what the Scripture speaketh, Prov. 30. 17. *The eye that mocketh at his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the Valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it.* Intimating that such Children are like to come unto miserable and shameful deaths at last. Again, lying is a sin, which Childhood and Youth is for the most part deeply guilty of, Psal. 58. 3. *They go astray as soon as they be born speaking Lyes.* How natural is it for Children to commit a fault, and then to excuse it by telling a Lye? Art thou a lying Child? then the Devil is thy Father, and except thou repent of this sin, and beware of it for the time to come, when once thy Soul is out of thy body, it must be cast into that Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second Death, Joh. 8. 44. Rev, 21. 8. So for breaches of the seventh Commandment, they are *Youthful Lusts.* Wherefore Solomon saith, that he looked out at the window of his house, and discerned amongst the Youths a young man void of understanding, and he was going to an whore house like an Ox to the slaughter, or a fool to the correction of the Stocks, not knowing that it is for his life, nor considering that her house is the way to Hell, going down to the chambers of Death, Prov. 7. &c. Young men whose natures are not changed by the regenerating grace of the Spirit of God, do usually live in some unclean lust or other. Either fornication, or self-pollution, or in secret wickedness of darkness. You young men whose consciences accuse you of guilt before the Lord in regard of these evils, I charge you in the Name of

that you humble your selves deeply in his sight for past transgressions, and sin no more, as ever you desire to escape eternal Damnation. Though these cursed Lusts may be as dear to you as life and limbs, yet better to pluck out thy right eye, to cut off thy right hand, then that thy whole body should be cast into Hell fire, where the worm dieth not, and where the fire never shall be quenched.

Again, Sabbath breaking is a sin which Young ones are often found guilty of before the Lord. There was a young man [g] (whom many of you have heard of) that came to an untimely end, and that sin of Sabbath breaking made way to his ruine: when he should have been hearing the word on the Lords day, he would rather go to wicked houses; that at last, God was so provoked with him, as to leave him to commit a Capital sin upon the Sabbath day, for which he was brought to deserved execution. And when in Prison, he said to some that came to visit him, *O Wretch that I was! I studied how I might spend the Lords day in the Devills work: that time which I should have served God in, I did most for Satan in it. O* (said he) *tell young men from me, that the breaking of the Sabbath is a dangerous and costly sin.* And therefore young men beware of that sin. Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy, or you will never Remember your Creator as you ought to doe.

Thomas Savage, he was executed Ratcliff Feb. 28. 668.

Once more: Sinfull Company keeping is an [illegible] that young men are apt to be drawn away from God their Creator by. Many an hopefull young man, that hath been well instructed, that hath had great convictions upon his spirit, and friends that wished him well, have been comforted in him; yet hath afterwards fallen in with bad Company, and that hath proved the eternal ruine of his Soul. I have known young men that upon sick-beds, and death-beds [illegible]

made lamentable cryes, *O my sinfull Company (saith he) hath undone me for ever!* Therefore let young men remember what the Scripture speaketh to them, *My Son if sinners intice thee consent thou not. Walk not thou in way of them, refrain thy foot from their path*, Prov. 1. 10 15. Again, *He that walketh with the wise shall be wise; but a Companion of Fools shall be destroyed*, Prov. 13. 20 Young man, wouldest thou not be destroyed? then be not a Companion of Fools. Remember also what David saith, and follow his example, Psal. 26. 4. 5. 9. *I have not sate with vain persons. I have hated the Congregation of evill doers, and will not sit with the wicked. Gather not my Soul with Sinners.* When thou dyest, thou would'st not have thy soul to be gathered to the place where sinners must be for ever: then sit not with them, hold not familiarity with them now: For they that are thy Companions and Familiars here, are like to be so to eternity.

2. *Hearken to good Instruction.* In the holy Scriptures God himself instructs you. And therefore let young ones be diligent in reading the Scriptures, that is the way to become like unto Timothy, to whom it was said, from a Child thou hast known the holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through the Faith that is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. 3. 15. And when David had propounded that Question, *wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?* the Answer given is, *by taking heed thereto according to thy word*, Psal. 119. 9. For the most part it is so, that the wayes of young men need much cleansing: Youth is commonly the unclean part of a man's life: but those young men that will make conscience to cleanse their wayes and walkings according to the Word of God, shall thereby be cleansed. And this way preached, and publickly dispensed, is a means appointed by the Lord for instruction of young

ones

ones, that they may learn the fear of God, Deut. 31. 12, 13. *Gather the People together, men and women, and Children, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and that their Children which have not known any thing may learn to fear the Lord.* And therefore mind seriously what the Ministers of God speak in his Name. Mind it young men, lest you mourn at last, and say, How have I hated Instruction, and have not obeyed the voice of my Teachers, nor inclined mine Ear to them that instructed me! yea, and hearken to the good Instructions which you receive from those whom God hath set over you. Have you not Masters, Fathers, Mothers, that admonish you and give you good counsel from day to day! despise them not. Doth not the Scripture say to you, *Hear ye Children the Instruction of a Father*, Prov. 4. 1. And again, *My Son hear the Instruction of thy Father, and forsake not the Law of thy Mother*, Chap. 1. 13. Eternal woe is like to be the portion of those Children that regard not what Father and Mother say to them. Remember Eli his Sons; they were proud and headstrong; their Father reproved them, and exhorted them to amend their wayes, it is said, *Notwithstanding they hearkned not to the voice of their Father, because the Lord would slay them.* 1 Sam. 2. 25. Art thou the young man that wilt not hearken to the voice of thy Father when he giveth thee good Counsel? This is a sign that *the Lord will slay thee*: a sad sign that thou art appointed to some terrible destruction at the last.

3. *Remember those things which if duly thought on may cause you to Remember your Creator in the dayes of your Youth.* e.g. Think sadly of the preciousness of Time; that so you may pass the time of your sojourning here in fear. You young men, are exceeding apt to misspend precious hours, nay dayes in an

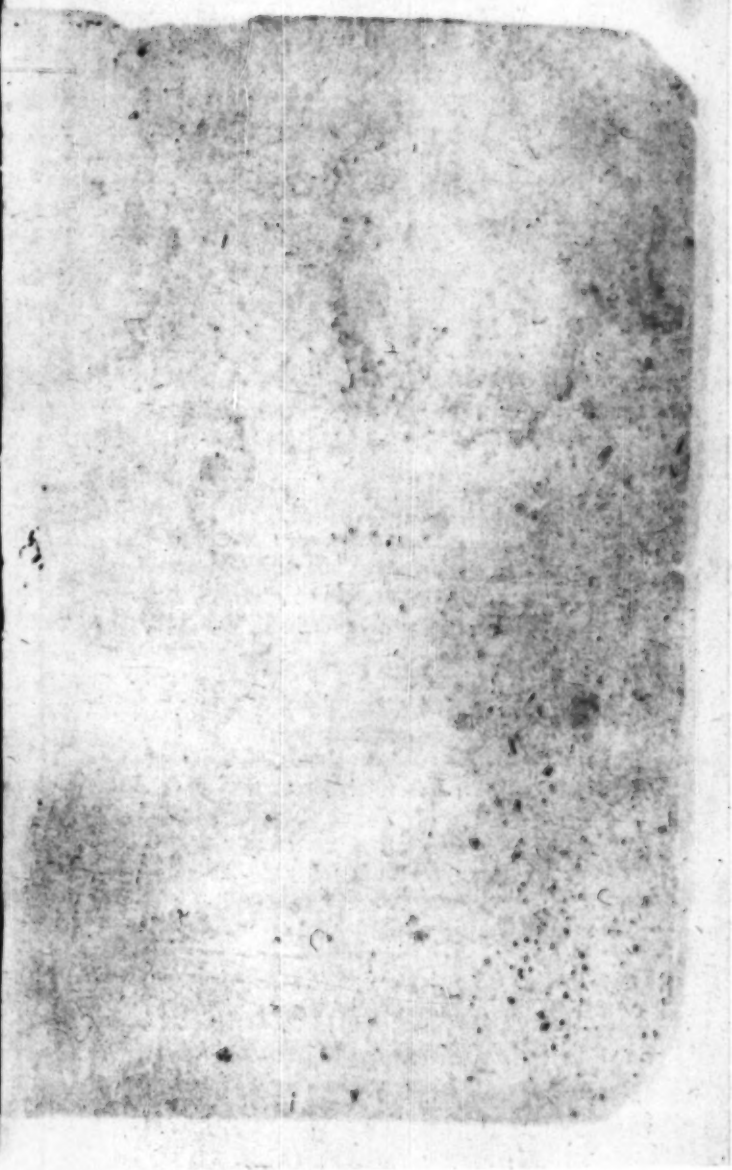
vanity, but it is because you do not consider how precious time is. Are not some that were once your companions in sin, dead, and (as there is cause to fear) dropped down into Hell? They would give Worlds (were it in their power) to enjoy that precious time, that is lost & can never be regained. Shortly your time to remember your Creator in, will be past and gone forever. Remember also the worth of your own souls, what shall a man give in Exchange for his Soul? If he should gain the whole world, & loose his own Soul, what is he profited? young men & children, do you think of this! As young as you are, you have immortal Souls that must be either saved or damned, that when once you are dead, your Souls must go to be either in Heaven or Hell to all Eternity. And remember Death, which may be on you, ere you be aware of it. Thou knowest not but that this night thy Soul may be taken from thee. It hath been truly said, [b] *An old man hath death before his face, but a young man hath death behind his back*, that may overtake him before he thinks of any such thing. Children may dye as well as others, Rev. 2. 23. *I will kill Children with Death*. I remember I have somewhere read, of a serious godly child, that would not speak vain words like other Children, but was careful to improve his time well, and being asked the Reason of his seriousness, O (saith he) I remember that I must dye. When some replyed to him, you are young, and may live many a fair day, what should you think of Death for? *nay* (said he) *I was in the burying place, & there I saw a grave, that was shorter then I am*. So Children, look into the burying place, and there you will see graves that are shorter then you are; there you will see that those that have been as young as you are, and younger too, have dyed and been put into their graves, and therefore it may be so with you.

[b] *A* nas.

O then Remember your Creator in the dayes of your Youth. And remember the day of Judgement. As Solomon in this Content saith, *Know O young man, what God will bring thee to Judgement.* Young men are apt to put the thoughts of death and Judgement far away, and therefore they remember not their Creator. Think with thy self, I must stand before Jesus Christ the Son of God at the great day; and what shall I then say to him? and what will the Lord in that day say unto me? will he say, come thou blessed? or will he not say to me, depart thou cursed.

4. *Look unto Jesus Christ.* O betake your selves to him. He calls from Heaven unto you young men and children, that are here before the Lord this day, goe to him by Prayer, and to God by him. Some of you when you are asked that Question, *do you pray,* Answer, I cannot pray. You would do it, you say, but you know not how to pray. Why, get into a secret place, and there lift up thine Eyes and heart to the Lord Jesus, and if thou can'st say nothing else, yet say, *O thou Son of God have mercy on me! O convert me, and save my poor Soul!* who knoweth but the Lord from on high, may look upon thee, since the Lord Jesus himself hath said, *They that seek me early shall find me:*

Tibi Domine.



Pray for the Rising Generation.

OR A

SERMON

Wherein Godly Parents are encouraged to Pray and Believe for their Children.

Preached the third day of the fifth Moneth, 1678. which day was set apart by the second Church in *Boston* in *New-England*, humbly to seek unto God by Fasting and Prayer, for a Spirit of Converting Grace to be poured out upon the Children, and *Rising Generation* in *New-England*.

The second Impression.

By INCREASE MATHER, Teacher of that Church.

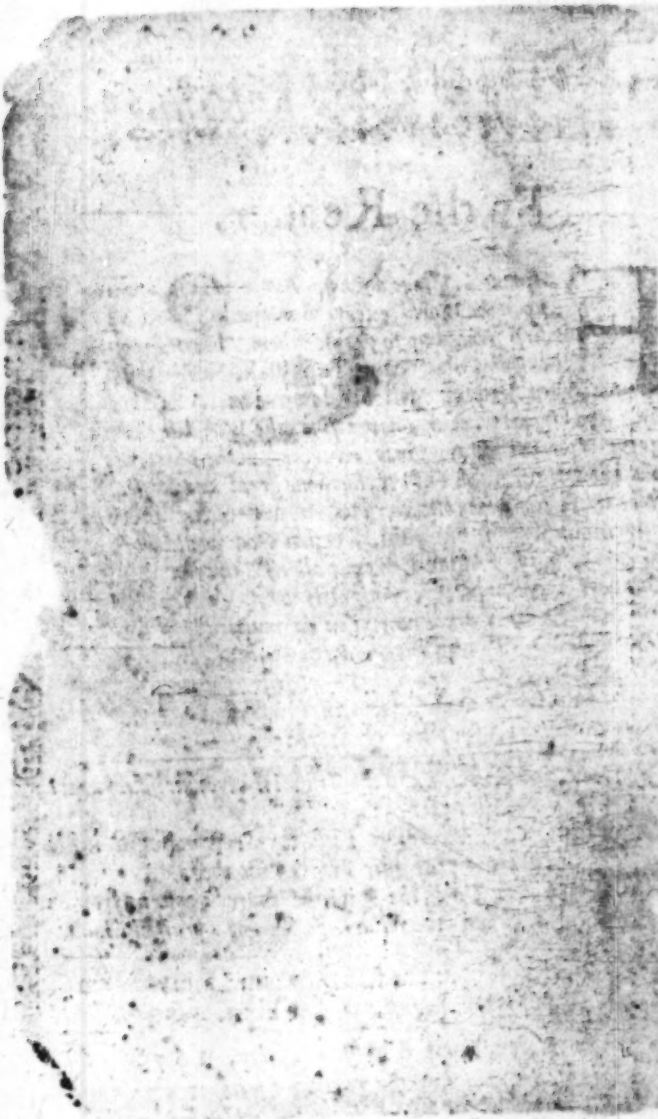
Deut. 30.6. *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed.*

2. Sam. 7.27. *Therefore hath thy Servant found in his heart to pray this Prayer unto thee.*

Isai. 32.15. *Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness become a fruitfull land.*

Fieri non potest ut filius istarum Lachrymarum pereat. *August. Confes.* lib. 8. cap. 12.

Boston, Printed by *John Foster*, 1679.



To the Reader.

EMinent Blessings doe not use to be poured down upon the World, except the Church of God be first stirred up to pray for them. The Lord who is stil'ed Shomeang Tephillah, The Hearer of Prayer, delights to give mercy in this way. And it was never known since the World began, that the Spirit of Prayer was awakened in the hearts of those that can cry Abba Father, but some great and blessed effect, did in due time follow: He said not to the seed of Jacob seek ye me in vain. O that God would bow the heart of New-England, even of all his Saints in these Churches, as one man, to cry mightily to heaven, that his Spirit may be powred on the now risen (a multitude of faithfull men that are risen up in their Fathers stead) and upon the after Rising Generation. The Lords People have need of something to comfort them, in this day, when there are so many dolefull symptoms of approaching wrath and ruine. Now if God say unto his Praying ones amongst us, Seek ye my face for the rising Generation, and their hearts answer again, Lord thy face we will seek for them, that will be no small encouragement to Faith, that the blessed design of our Fathers (now with Christ beholding his glory) who transported themselves into this vast, and then waste Wilderness, in special with respect unto Posterity, that so they might leave a seed that shall serve him, and be accounted to the Lord for a Generation, will not be wholly frustrate. When did any People by Fasting and Prayer, ask the holy Spirit of the Father, for themselves and theirs, and yet received no Answer? Shall we be the first that God ever denied?

To the Reader.

As for the ensuing Sermon, if the Publication of it shall in the least stand, to set the wheel of Prayer a going, on the behalf of the rising Generation, I trust it will not be a grief to my self, or others, that I have granted a Copy of what was delivered, unto such as have importuned me thereunto. Some years ago, I entertained another * Discourse, relating to the Rising Generation in New-England, then in my thoughts. I may not say in those purposes; but have through the good hand of God upon me, finished (according to the measure of Grace received) what I designed. Nor am I altogether without hope, but that God, who hath chosen the weak things of the World to do his work by, that so the excellency of the power may appear to be of God, will own that poor endeavour for the good of souls, when his Providence shall bring it forth. In the mean time, this being of the same nature with the former, let the candid Christian Reader accept of it, and help me also by his Prayers, that I may serve the Generation wherein I live, and wherein I am, according to the Will of God.

Boston, August 22.
1678.

Increase Mather.

Pray for the Rising Generation.

ISAIAH. 44.3

I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Blessing upon thine Off-spring.

THE Prophet having in the conclusion of the preceding Chapter, in the Name of God, denounced heavy Judgments to come upon the Apostate Church of *Israel*, he doth proceed in this Chapter to speak by way of Consolation to the godly remnant amongst them; And for that end doth put them in mind of a most gracious and glorious promise; under which we have, 1. The persons considered, or the Subject of this promise, *viz.* The Seed of God, ver. 1. *Yet hear now O Jacob my Servant, and Israel whom I have chosen.* Who are described from their political birth, ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord, that made thee, and formed thee from the Womb.* The Children of Israel here considered as a Church and State, were born in the Land of Egypt, when the Lord brought them out of Egypt; they were then formed to be a people for himself; The Lord moulded them up into a proportionable frame of Church and State; for which cause did the Chil-

deen of *Israel* begin their Religious Account, (albeit their civil Account began six Moneths before that) from the time of the year when they came out of *Egypt*, since that then they seemed to begin their life. And then they were a *Jesurun*; Thou *Jesurun*, *i. e.* a righteous People as to their constitution and profession, according to the signification of the name *Jesurun*; they were wholly a right Seed, under most righteous Laws. 2. We have the blessing promised in the 3d. verse: And it is first expressed, then explained. It is expressed in the former part of the verse, *I will pour water upon the thirsty*, (so the verse should be read) *and floods upon the dry ground*: alluding partly unto plentiful showrs, whereby the thirsty Earth is made fruitful, and partly unto Rivers, such as *Nilus* in *Egypt*, the floods and seasonable overflowings whereof do enrich the Earth: the promise is explained in the latter part of the verse, the words that are before us to insist on. *I will pour my Spirit and my blessing*, *i. e.* that wonderful blessing of the Spirit: They are spiritual waters which are here spoken of. No other showrs then those that come down from the third, and highest Heaven: and this promise is further illustrated from the blessed extent of it, in that not only Parents, but Children are concerned therein. *On thy Seed*, *i.e.* thy Children, and on *thine Offspring*, i. e. Posterity as some render the word, *Heb. I will pour my blessing upon thy young sprigs.* The Children of Gods Servants, that spring from them and must succeed when they are dead and gone to of the world, are intended by this expression.

Concerning the fulfilment of this promise, this (as well as many other Scriptures which are Prophetical and promissory) doth admit of a Typical and Partial, as also an Antitypical, and more plenary accomplishment. The Lords people whilest in

were like unto dry and desolate ground; but the Lord revived them afterwards, and brought them into a flourishing estate, and there was a glorious work of the Spirit of God in that matter, *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.* And there will be a more glorious accomplishment of this Prophecy and Promise, when God shall pour out a Spirit of converting Grace upon the body of the Israelitish Nation.

Moreover, the words being a special branch of the Covenant of Grace, which God hath established with his Servants and with their Children, Gentiles are concerned therein as well as Jews; for upon them is come the blessing of *Abraham* by Jesus Christ.

And indeed the words have special reference unto New-Testament times, which is also intimated by that expression of pouring the Spirit. [a] God is said to give his Spirit, under the Old-Testament, but it is very observable, that he is not said to pour his Spirit upon men, except in the New Testament, or in Scriptures that do refer to the dayes of the Gospel.

[a] So Dr. Owen of the Spirit. p. 8

The Doctrine which we may take up from the Words, is,

Doct. *That one of the greatest blessings promised in the Covenant of Grace, is, That the Lord will pour his Spirit upon the Children and Posterity of his Servants.*

Now for the clearing of this Doctrine, four things may be inquired into: (1.) What is here meant by the Spirit? (2.) What is implyed in this pouring the Spirit? (3.) How it doth appear that the pouring of the Spirit upon Children is a great blessing? (4.) The reason why the Lord hath made such a Promise.

Q. 1. *What is here meant by the Spirit?*

Answ. The Spirit is not here taken in a personal sense; although it be a glorious Truth, that the

the Holy Ghost himself doth dwell in the hearts of Believers, [*] yet he is not as to his person said to be poured on men; for so he is equally in all the Saints: whereas this expression of *Pouring* the Spirit intimates a larger communication of him to some then unto others. Wherefore the Phrase is Metonymical, that being affirmed of the same, which is proper to the Effect. In respect of his effects and operations the Holy Ghost is poured forth upon his Servants.

1. Then by the Spirit here is meant, *The gifts of the Spirit.* All spiritual gifts, especially illumination in the mysteries of the Gospel are from the Holy Ghost: Hence they that have such gifts are said to be made *partakers of the Holy Ghost*, Heb. 6. 4. He that hath a gift of knowledge, or a gift of Prayer, hath received it from the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit of the Lord is so far poured upon him. And the gifts of the Spirit are compared unto water in the Scripture, Joh. 7. 38. 39. *He that believeth on me, out of his belly*, i.e. *his heart, shall flow rivers of living water; this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.* Let as Waters do refresh the bodies of men, so the gifts of the Holy Ghost do refresh their Souls: when the Lord did shower down his Spirit in that plentiful measure on the Apostles, thousands of souls were refreshed and revived thereby. This then is partly meant here, when it is said, I will pour my Spirit on your Seed, *i.e.* your Children shall have gifts of the Holy Ghost bestowed upon them; they shall be taught to know the Lord from the greatest to the least.

2. By the Spirit here converting, fructifying Grace is meant: The Spirit is put for the grace thereof: Conversion is the special work of the Holy Ghost: The conversion of the house of *David*, [illegible] the Fleet of God, is intimated by that of *pouring a Spirit of Grace* [illegible] Zech. 12. 10. Grace is [illegible]

[*] See Mr. Cotton's Answer to Lady. 1. 36. 37. [illegible] Dr. [illegible] of Perseverance. Chap. 8. and Mr. [illegible] on Cor. 3. 207. [illegible]

in the soul by no other hand then that of the spirit. When God sends down his Spirit to accompany his Word and Ordinances, then converting work goeth on, but if he withhold the efficacious influences of his holy Spirit, converting work will be at a stand, all means and outward dispensations notwithstanding. Wherefore *Conversion*, or *Regeneration* is called the *Renewing of the Holy Ghost*, Tit. 3. 5. These words then are a promise and gracious intimation unto the Lords People, that a spirit of converting grace shall be poured upon their Children.

We come to the second enquiry, *viz.* What is implyed in this *Pouring* of the Spirit, which the Text speaketh of?

Answ. 1. This expression doth imply, *that the graces of the Spirit are fitly resembled unto water*: so much is intimated by the Metaphor of *pouring*, which alludeth unto the Clouds, pouring down rain upon the Earth. Water is of a purifying nature, so the waters of the Spirit, sanctifying grace doth cleanse, and purifie the souls of men, *Ezek.* 36. 25. *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you.* The guilt of sin is washed away in the blood of Christ; the filth of sin is purged by those [illegible] waters which do proceed from the Spirit of [illegible] even converting sanctifying grace: for the [illegible] reason grace is compared unto fire, Math. 3. 11. Metals, gold and silver, are purified by fire, other things by water, therefore are the blessed operations of the Holy Ghost compared both to the one, and to the other. Water is of a mollifying nature; the Earth that is [illegible] and hard is thereby softened, Psal. 65. 10. *Thou [illegible] the Earth and waterest it*, [illegible] greatly enriched it with the River of God, [illegible] full of water, *thou makest it soft with showers*, [illegible] converting

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grace soften the dry & hard hearts of the Children of men; that heart which was as hard as stone before, if once a Spirit of converting grace be poured thereon; it doth become soft and pliable like water. Again, Water maketh fruitful; showers and floods do so: Thus when the Lord doth rain the waters of the Spirit, or cause them to flow over the Souls of men, they are made fruitful in the works of Righteousness, *Isai.* 32.15. *Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the Wilderness become a fruitful field.* That Soul that was a desolate, parched, barren Wilderness, when once the Spirit from on high is poured upon it; doth become like a fruitful field, *Ezek.*34.26,27. Fruits of holiness and righteousness are the effect of being watered by the spirit of God; only the converted man, that hath Grace in his soul, is indeed fruitful, others are barren and desolate ground. Once more, water is of an healing nature; so are the waters of the spirit, sin is the souls sickness, grace is the souls health; the wound received by original corruption is in some measure healed by converting grace, *Ezek.*47.9. *For they shall be healed, and every thing shall live whither the River cometh.* Those words are a Prophesy concerning the Conversion of the Gentiles, by means of that healing virtue which doth attend the living waters of the Gospel.

2. This expression of pouring the Spirit doth intimate, *an abundant measure of the Spirit*, i. e. of the gifts and graces thereof.

Pouring is something more then *Sprinkling*, as when there cometh a plentiful rain from Heaven, enough to satisfie dry Ground, it cometh pouring down; As *Elihu* speaks, Job.36.27,28. *He maketh small the drops of water, they pour down Rain according to the vapour thereof, which the Clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly.* So this pouring of the Spirit

noteth a great showr of grace, Hence it is said in the Context, that *Floods* shall be poured on the dry ground, now a *Flood of Grace* intimates a great measure thereof. There are many Scripture expressions that confirm this, *Prov.*1.23. *I will pour out my Spirit upon you.* The Hebrew word *Nabang* which is there translated, *Pour*, signifieth to *spring up*, intimating that the spirit of grace in the souls of Believers is like a Fountain, where is an abundance of water, *Isai.* 32.15. *Until the Spirit be poured out upon us from on high.* The Hebrew word *Gnadah* signifieth *to make bare*; so that the meaning is, that there shall be a manifest, conspicuous pouring forth of the spirit, that all the world should take notice of it. And indeed, when a soul is converted there is an abundant effusion of the spirit, to accomplish such a strange thing as that is, to change such a cursed nature, to renew such a vile heart, must needs proceed from a plentiful effusion of the spirit, *Tit.*3.5,6. *By the washing of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Iesus Christ our Saviour.* Wherefore when it is said, *I will pour my Spirit on thy Seed, and my blessing on thine Off-spring*: the Lord [illegible] graciously promise his servants that their Children [illegible] attain unto an eminency of spiritual [illegible] large measures of grace and Holiness.

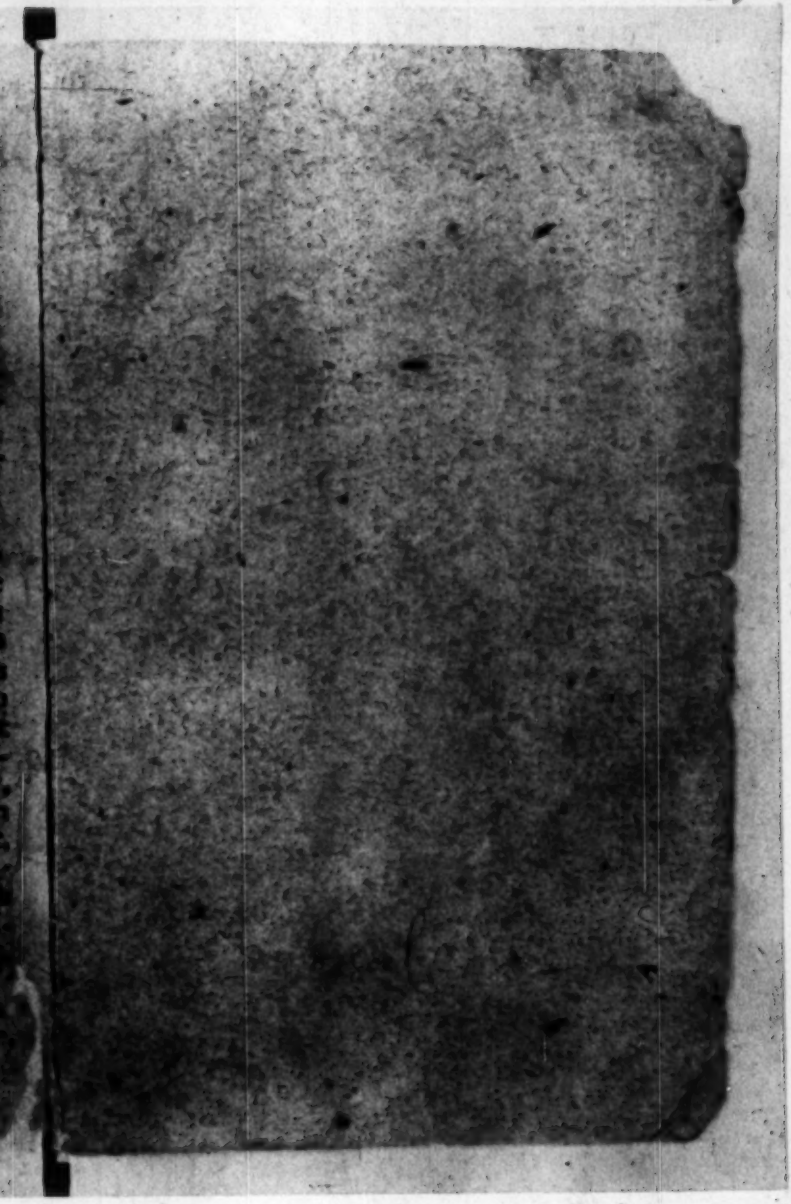
We come to the third Enquiry, [illegible] *that the pouring of the Spirit upon [illegible] is a great blessing?* Answ.

1. *In that the gift of the Holy Ghost is mentioned in the Scripture as a great and wonderful thing.* It is said Act. [illegible].45. *They were astonished, because that on the Gentiles was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost* [illegible] mentioned as such a [illegible] equivalent [illegible] things, *Math.*7.11. [illegible] *I will give good thi*[illegible]

A6

Luke it is expressed by saying, *Your Heavenly Father shall give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him*, Chap. 11. 13. So then the gift of the Spirit is virtually all good things: Truly if God pour his Spirit upon our Children, he doth more for them then if he bestowed all the good things in the World upon them. This is the great promise of the Gospel: As the great promise of the Old-Testament was concerning the coming of the *Messias*, so the great promise of the New-Testament doth respect a more plentiful effusion of the Spirit of Grace. Hence the pouring down of [illegible] is noted by that expression of the promise [illegible] And he is called the *Spirit of* [illegible] is being the great gift which God [illegible] bestow on his Servants.

[illegible] Eternal good things are [illegible] of the Spirit, upon whom [illegible] and in them he remaineth [illegible] which is [illegible] as well as to [illegible] upon your Children. That [illegible] of the Holy Ghost in Belie- [illegible] Testament speaketh so much of, [illegible] and in them [illegible] of the Spirit, [illegible] is a seed of [illegible] and abide[illegible] As [illegible] Fire (which [illegible] ing [illegible] Heaven [illegible] no more [illegible] in a Believing [illegible] into living. [illegible]



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July 22, 1927

A Call from Heaven

To the Present and Succeeding

GENERATIONS

OR A

DISCOURSE

Wherin is shewed,

I. That the Children of Godly Parents are under special Advantages and Encouragements to seek the Lord.

II The exceeding danger of Apostasie, especially as to those that are the Children and Posterity of such as have been eminent for God in their Generation.

III. That Young Men ought to Remember their Creator.

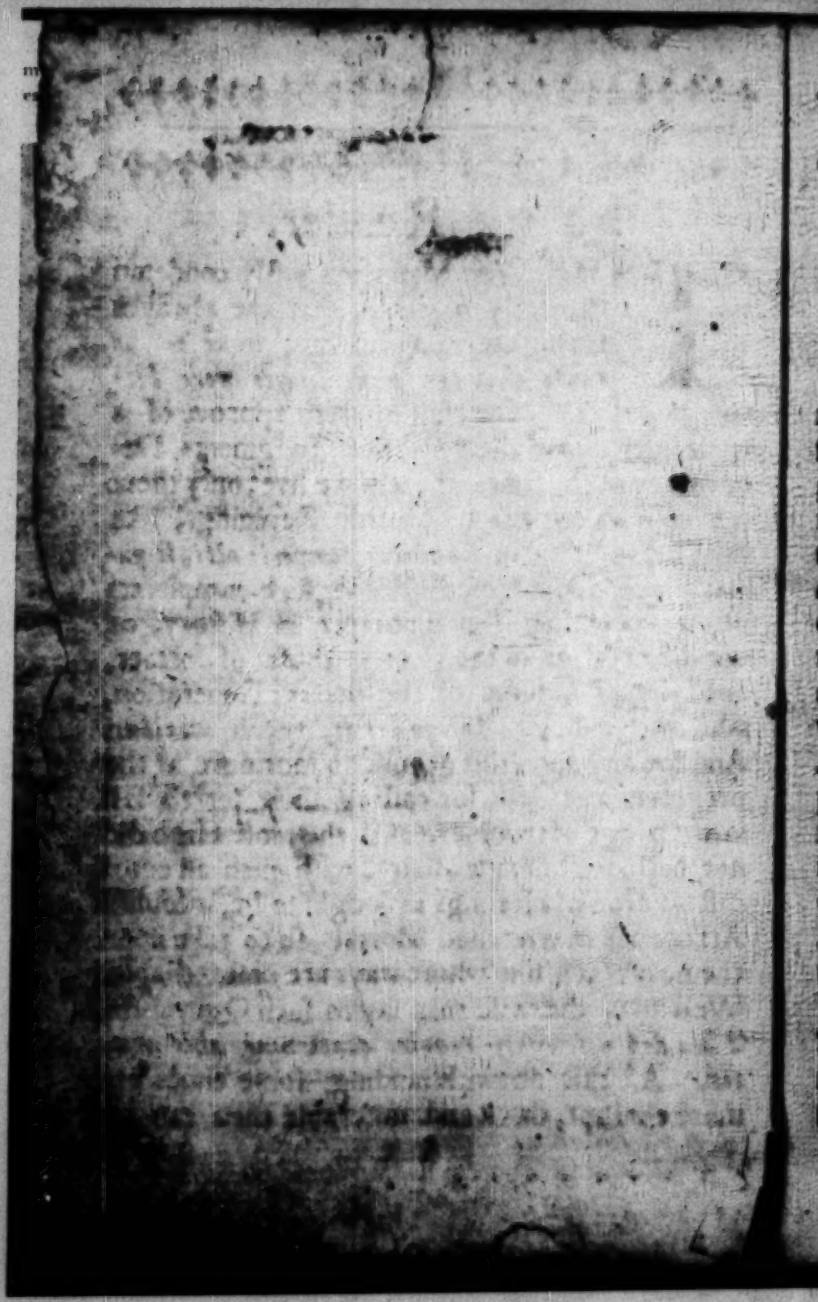
By *INCREASE MATHER*,
Teacher of a Church at *Boston* in *New-England*.

Psal. 45. 17. *I will make thy name to be remembred in all Generations.*

Psal. 71.17,18. *O God thou hast taught me from my Youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wonderful works. Forsake me not until I have shewed thy strength to this Generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.*

Hac Casti maneant in Religione Nepotes
Et Nati Natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis.

Boston, Printed by [illegible]



A1 Verso

To the Reader.

THE Wise Man doth justly condemn the folly of those, that are alwayes saying and complaining, *What is the cause that the former dayes were better then these?* Not that he doth approve of a spirit insensible of the evils, Sins, Judgments, Degeneracy of the times wherein we live; only there is in men an aptness to Morose Repinings, like the Poets Old man, *Laudator temporis acti, se puero*; which is not from wisdome; such complaints often proceeding from ignorance in History, or non-observation of the vices in those of former, and virtues in some of the present Generation, who are endued *Antiqua fide, priscis moribus*. And for any upon this ground to murmure at the providence of God, for casting their lot to fall into an age of troubles, as if the most High did not ballance humane affairs, with such an equal distribution of blessings as ought to be, is foolish Arrogance in wretched Mortals, so to take upon them, to teach him whose ways are unsearchable. Well may the wise man say to such Querulists, *Thou dost not wisely enquire concerning this matter*. All this notwithstanding, some times are more corrupt, dark and miserable then

ſaid of all. nor did Solomon ever ſay or think otherwiſe. As Nebuchadnezzars image had a golden head, and iron feet, ſo there are golden and iron Ages. And although Golden times are a coming, when Jeruſalem ſhall be holy, and ſtrangers paſs through her no more, when David ſhall be Prince for ever, yet are we, upon whom the ends of the world are come, in an Iron Age, the Divine Oracle having told us, that *in the laſt dayes perillous times ſhall come*; yea the dregs of thoſe times are now at hand. They that have their thoughts exercised to diſcern things of that nature, feel it, and bewail it, that there is a woſull decay of Religion throughout the world, yea, throughout the Proteſtant World. The Profeſſors of this Age, have more of Light and Notion, but leſs of love and Zeal and Power, then did appear in the Martyrs, and bleſſed *Puritans* (for time was when the Saints were known by that honourable Nickname) that are gone before us. And let it be our Prayer and endeavour, that they who ſhall ſtand upon the Stage of this world as ſoon as we are gone, may be and doe better then their Predeceſſors, that there may be no cauſe to think of what ſometimes an Heathen expreſſed, *Ætas Parentum, pejor Avis, tulit nos nequiores, mox daturos Progeniem vitioſiorem.*

What ſhall come on the Riſing Generation in New-England, is with Him that knoweth all things.

A2 Verso

The preſent Aſpect of Providence is diſmal on more accounts then one; eſpecially in that God hath been removing the Pillars of this Generation, even thoſe that [illegible]ſtood in the Gap, and would have done mu[illegible]towards keeping out a Deluge of overflowing Judgements. It is not [illegible]ten years ſince *Mitchel* died (not to ſpeak of others, whom this Generation loſt at that time, for one ſuch ſtroke ſeldome goeth alone) and all New-England ſhook when that Pillar fell to the ground. *For all this, his anger is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill:* Of late he that holds the Stars in his right hand, hath cauſed ſome of our brighteſt Lights to ſet; and is not that a ſign of darkneſs to follow? Such Rebukes of God make the Pillars of Heaven to tremble. And what ſhall we ſay, when the Lord is threatning to dry up that fountain, whoſe ſtreams have made glad the City of God? Poor *New-England*! Shall the day come, when there will be none to guide thee, of all the Sons thou haſt brought forth? Doubtleſs, the Lord will not as yet, wholly caſt off a Generation that are the Poſterity of his faithfull Servants, that forſook all for Chriſt, and that they might leave their Children under the bleſſed wings of the Lord Jeſus. Nevertheleſs, how low he may bring this Generation, and how long it ſhall cotinnue, who can ſay? Only it is likely to be untill men ſhall ſay,

Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

As for the ensuing [illegible]*urse*, if the Reader expect any thing rare, or curious therein, he will find himself disappointed. I neither can if I would, nor am I willing to doe what I can, in such a way. I would rather let the world see, that I am of *Austins* judgement, who judged him the ablest Preacher *qui puriliter, triviatiter, populariter, simplicissimè dicit.* And it is a comfort to think, that such *Simple Discourses*, which they that account themselves the Wits of the World, look upon as *Fooling*, will either be blessed by Christ for the Conversion and Edification of Souls, or turn for a Testimony to the Speaker. And what can a Christian desire more, then to be unto God a sweet favour of Christ in them that are saved & in them that perish? And that after he is fallen asleep, and gathered unto his Fathers, others shall bear witness that he served his own Generation according to the will of God?

Some years are past, since notice was given of this intended Publication, (and indeed since these Sermons (such as they are) were both preached, and thus transcribed) If I had had nothing else to mind, but what is here presented, doubtless it would not have stuck in the birth so long: But those

those that are acquainted with my employments, together with my extream *Hebetude*, and inability to the performance of any good work, will not wonder that it cometh forth no sooner. My Brothers *Dying Exhortation to the Rising Generation*, hath been Printed and reprinted, and the good of souls thereby promoved, and will (I believe) be some addition to his crown and glory, in the blessed day (which God in mercy grant that it may come quickly) when the Son of God shall give to every man, according as his work shall be. The Lord saw good to remove my Brother out of this into a better world, before he had fully expressed what was in his heart, respecting *this Generation*. I have so much the more reason to bend my knees, before the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, in all humble thankfulness, for that he hath lengthened [redacted] my life as this day, and given me to endeavour the finishing of what my Brother happily began, though whether with the like success, is with him unto whom it belongs to give the increase.

It is the most glorious work in the World, (the Angels of heaven think so, & would be glad if they might be so improved) to have an hand in the Conversion, and consequently in the Salvation of precious immortal Souls. May this poor Labor,

or any other weak and worthleſs endeavours of mine, be in the leaſt conducing that way, my deſign and deſires are attained. I truſt in Chriſt it ſhall be ſo.

Increaſe Mather.

Boſton
3. m. 16. d.
1679.

ERRATA.

P.5. in Margin r. *Mr. Carter.*
P.26. l.12. r. *Luiſolph.* In the Margin for 223. r. 422.
P.35. l.22. for *being* r. *bearing.*
P.52. l.34. for *Covenant* r. *Account.*
P.70. l.18. r. *Hajamin.*
P.75. l.13. r. *incumbent.*
P.85. l.29. r. as far as time &
P.89. l.12. Add *Alſo* before the Parentheſis.

That Quotation referred unto in the Margin of p.78. is to be ſeen in p.140. of the Book called New-Englands Memorial.

A Call

A 4 Verso

A Call

TO THE

Rising Generation.

1. Chron. 28. 9.

If thou seek him, he will be found of thee.

GOd in his Providence doth many times so order, as that *the last words* of his eminent Servants shall be of most weighty consideration; The Scripture sets a special Emphasis and Remark upon the last words of David, 2 Sam. 23. 1. *now these are the last words of David the sweet singer of Israel*; not that he never spake any words after those, but they were expressed by him, toward the close of his dayes, not very long before he left the world. The same is to be said concerning the words now before us; They are amongst *the last*, yea, the dying speeches of that holy man of God; who perceiving that the time of his departure was at hand, layeth a most solemn charge upon his son Solomon, that he should endeavour to approve himself a faithful Ser-

vant of his Fathers God. Several Arguments are made use of to back this charge; one is in these words, taken from the benefit which would attend a sincere seeking the Lord. *If thou seek him, he will be found of thee*; that is to say, thou shalt then be made happy in the enjoyment of God for ever. If others seek God in sincerity of heart, they shall find him, but (saith David) it is eminently true concerning thee, because the Lord hath been thy Fathers God. Thou art a child of a Father that had a special interest in God, and therefore if thou set thy self to seek him, know for thy encouragement, that he will be most ready, to shew himself favourable to thee, wherefore the Doctrine which may at present be insisted on from the words, is,

Doctr. *That the Children of godly Parents are under peculiar advantages and encouragements to seek the Lord.* For the clearing of this Doctrine, two things may be attended. 1. To enquire what is implyed in this seeking the Lord which the Text speaketh of? 2. How it doth appear that the Children of godly Parents are under peculiar advantages and encouragement so to do?

Qu 1. *What is implyed in this seeking the Lord?*

Answ. 1. *It doth imply that men by nature are such as have lost God.* The sinner hath lost himself, *Luk.* 15. 32. *this thy brother was lost, and is found*, yea, and he hath lost God too. He is wandred from his Fathers house. Hence the Apostle said to the Ephesians, *they were without God in the World.* Yea, it is true concerning Children of godly Parents as well as others, *Eph.* 2. 3. *we* (saith the holy Apostle) *were by nature the Children of wrath even as others.* We that are Jews and descended of holy Ancestors, we that are now converted, and made Apostles of Christ, by nature were Subjects of the wrath and righteous displeasure of God,

God. Not but that some of the Children of godly men, have grace wrought in them whilest in a state of Infancy, as John Baptist was filled with the holy Ghost from his mothers womb, but they do not derive that grace from their Parents, and therefore it is not natural but supernatural, when any of the Children of sinful men are made gracious.

2. *Seeking the Lord doth imply a sense of this lost condition.* Sense of want puts men upon seeking. The Prodigal was hunger-bitten before he would seek to be reconciled to his Father, when he saw that he was feign to live upon husks, and that there was no way but he must perish with hunger, except he sought unto his Father for a supply, he would do so. If a man hath lost a thing, except he know that he hath lost it, he will not seek after it. Hence in the Parable concerning the lost piece of silver, it is said, *what woman if she lose a piece of silver, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it,* Luk.15.8. So that there must be sense of lost before there will be seeking or finding. Nor will men seek the Lord, except they be by his Spirit made sensible, that they have lost his favour, and are through sin and the fall become miserable.

3. *This seeking doth imply earnest desire to find God.* That which a man seeketh after he would be glad to find. When Job sought after Communion with God, he maketh enquiry, *where shall I find him,* Job 23.3. No one will seek after that which is not an Object of his desires, Psal.27.4. *One thing have I desired, that will I seek after.* If thou seek him, that is to say, if thou earnestly desire to find the Lord, then so it shall be. If God be the chief Object of thy desires, if the desire of thy Soul be towards the remembrance of his Name, then he will be found of thee. As it was with David himself, *Psal.*63.1. *O God thou*

O my God, early will I seek thee: my Soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty Land where no water is. How are the desires and affections of a thirsty man carryed out after water, in a thirsty Land where no water is? when the desires of the Soul are in like manner carryed out after God, that is seeking him.

2. *Seeking the Lord doth imply diligence in the use of means in order to obtaining the favour of God.* The end implies the means which is necessary in order to obtaining that end, now the favour of God is the end of this seeking. Hence 'tis called a seeking his face, *i.e.* his favour. *Ps.* 105. 4. *Seek the Lords face.* & the means in order to obtaining that end, is Repentance of former sins, Faith in the righteousnes of Jesus Christ, (*Jer.* 50. 5.) walking according to the holy Rules of the Word of God, which is therefore called *a walking in all well pleasing before the Lord*, inasmuch as so to walk is the way to find the continuance of divine favour.

3. *Seeking the Lord doth imply the worship and service of God.* As they that do not worship God are said to be such as seek him not, *Isai.* 65. 1. *I am found of them that sought me not*, meaning that the Gentiles, who in former times did not own and worship the true God, should be brought to the knowledge of him. So to seek God is to worship him, 2 *Chron.* 11. 16. It is said, *that such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel*, i.e. to worship him, *came to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the Lord God of their Fathers.* It is true, that in special that great duty of Prayer (which is a special part of religious worship) is intended, yet not that only; all other parts of divine worship are comprehended under this expression. Hence it is in the Context noted by that of *serving the Lord.* Now to serve God is to worship him aright. *We* (said they in Ezra) *are the Servants of the*

God

God of Heaven, meaning that they did worship none else but him, so that a Servant of the Lord is the same with a worshipper of him. This *seeking* is here set in opposition to *forsaking* God. Now forsaking hath special respect to that sin of Idolatry and false worship, David was a man that was very faithful to God in the matters of his worship. As for Idols, he would not so much as name them, *Psal.* 16.4. And we read in the sacred History of David, that when he had subdued his Enemies, he burnt their Images and Idols, in an holy indignation at the sin of Idolatry. Now he doth exhort his Son Solomon, to follow his Fathers steps in being loyal to God in the matters of his worship. All these particulars may be intended here. *If thou seek the Lord*, &c. If thou art sensible of thy lost estate by nature, so as to desire reconciliation with God in the first place, and dost therefore repent of sin, and believe in Christ, and continuest to worship and serve God, according to his own will, then be assured that thou shalt enjoy his favour, and be everlastingly blessed.

We come now to the second thing propounded, viz. *To shew how it doth appear that the Children of godly Parents are under peculiar advantages and encouragement to seek the Lord.* Quest. 2.

In that the vein of Election doth run through the loyns of godly Parents for the most part. Though it be not wholly, and only so, that Elect Parents have none but elect Children, or that elect Children are alwayes born of elect Parents [a] yet God hath seen meet to cast the line of Election so, as that generally elect Children are cast upon elect Parents, John directs one of his Epistles, To the elect Lady and her Children, whom he also found walking in the Truth. Not only the Mother, but the Children did belong to God. As usually so it is, that if the mother be elect, at least Answ. 1.

[a] See Mr. Cotton of Abrahams Covenant, p. 38. 39. & Dr. White of Infant Bapt. p. 37.

least wise some of the Children are so too. There are many Scriptures which do intimate this truth, Psal.105.8. *He hath remembred his Covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.* Intimating both that the longer a generation doth continue godly, the more gracious will the Lord be to the Seed and posterity, and that there are some that in a continued Succession for many generations the Lord hath chosen. Hence Psal.103. 17. *The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his Righteousness unto Childrens Children.* Shewing that God from Eternity hath designed mercy to some Parents and to their Children, and their Childrens Children, Isai. 59.20. *my Spirit which is upon thee, & my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds seed saith the Lord, from hence forth & for ever.* To the same purpose is that, *Ezek.* 37.25. what more plain can be spoken, to shew that God doth many times cast elect Children upon elect Parents in a continued Succession from generation to generation? See also Isai.65.22,23, *Mine Elect and their Off-spring with them are the blessed of the Lord.* So that when Parents are Elect, usually their Children are so too. Hence it was said to Zacheus, *Salvation is come to thy house,* Luk.19.9. Not only to his Soul, but to his house. Usually if God intends to save a man, there are some of his house, *i. e.* posterity, that are heirs of salvation also. And therefore the Apostle said to the Jaylor, *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house,* Acts 16.31. How did Paul know that if the Jaylor believed his Children should be saved? was it from any special Revelation concerning those Children more then with respect unto others? no; but he knew, that when God brought the Father into a state of Salvati-

on,

on, he was wont to save however some of his Children and posterity. Hence also Paul said to Timothy, *when I call to remembrance the unfeigned Faith in thee, which dwelt first in thy Grand-mother Lois, and thy mother Eunice, and I am perswaded in thee also*, 2 Tim. 1.5. He doth probably and hopefully conclude, that Timothy did belong to God, because he was the Son of a godly mother and Grand-mother. Moreover, experience and observation doth confirm this truth, that *de facto* it hath been so. For the Elect are not found in all places alike, but in some Nations more then in others, and that for many Generations successively. And in some Families more then in others. There are some Families in the World, that God hath designed to shew peculiar mercy to them, from generation to generation. And if an account should be taken concerning all the godly men that are now alive in the world, doubtless it would be found, that the greatest part of them are sprung from godly Parents. Though there may be many converted ones in the world, whose Parents did not fear God, yet for the generality of true believers they are such as have descended from believing Parents,

2. *The Lord hath established his Covenant not only with Parents, but with Children also.* Gen. 17.7. *I will establish my covenant between me & thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee & to thy seed after thee.* The Saints in all ages are concerned in Abrahams covenant, under which children are comprehended. To say that the Covenant was extended to Children under the Old Testament, but not under the New, is to lessen the grace of God in these dayes of the Gospel. Yea then the Jews would have been great loosers by believing on Christ. If they could have said, in former times our Children were interested in the gra-

cious Covenant of God, but if we imbrace the Gospel, they shall have no part in the Lord, this would have been such an objection against beleiving as could never have been answered. Wherefore, we shall find that those Scriptures which relate to Gospel times, expresly declare, That not only Believers themselves, but their children also, are subjects of the Lords gracious covenant with his people. Isai. 61.8.9. *I will make an everlasting covenant with them and their Seed shall be known among the Gentiles, & their off-spring among the people; all that see them shall acknowledge, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed.* And Chap. 65. v.23. *They are the Seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.* Now this consideration is a great encouragement to seek the Lord. So it was to them, Jer.3.22. *We come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.* We are thy Covenant people, and that doth encourage us to come unto thee. And this did encourage David to seek and hope for the Lords salvation. Psal. 86.16. *Save the son of thine handmaid.* And the Apostle did encourage the Jews to repent and return unto the Lord, from this argument, *viz.* in that they were *the children of the covenant.* Act.3.19,25. From thence it is evident, that the children of godly Parents stand in a peculiar relation unto God, & that therefore he will not cast them off, except there be great cause for it. Not surely as long as they seek him, and desire to return to him and serve him.

3. *There are special promises belonging to such children.* Not only the Covenant in general, which is, as it were, a Constellation of glorious promises, but there are peculiar Promises made concerning them. There is a promise that they shall be blessed above other children. Psal.112.1,2. *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, his seed shall be mighty on the Earth, the*

Gen-

Generation of the upright shall be blessed. And that successively from one generation to another. Psal.102. 28. *The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.* In another place, David speaking concerning the children of Gods servants, and that in the dayes of the Messiah, saith, *A Seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.* Psal.22.30. intimating that the Lord will uphold among the children of his people a certain number that shall be owned as a race of Gods Children. And therefore we have a promise of converting grace to be bestowed on such children. Deut.30.6. *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed.* There is a promise for grace as well as to grace, as to those that belong to the election of grace. Circumcision of heart implyeth Regeneration, which is promised to the Lords Servants with respect unto their children. And that was one reason why the Lord did of old appoint Circumcision to be applyed to the children of his people, that so this promise of converting grace in due time to be vouchsafed, might be sealed. The same thing is promised, Isai.44.3. *I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.* And the Lord hath made a blessed promise of salvation to such children, Isai.49.25. *I will save thy children;* Hence it is promised that *the seed of the Lords Servants shall inherit Sion.* Psal.69.36. Which word is made good in these dayes of the Gospel, by giving heaven to the children of beleivers as their everlasting inheritance. Now albeit these promises doe not absolutely respect all the children of every godly man, only the elect amongst them, yet they are generally and indefinitely propounded; and that is encouragement as to Parents to pray for their children, yea for all of them, as it was to David, 1.Chr. 17.3.last.

O my God, thou hast told thy servant, thou wilt build him an house, therefore thy Servant hath found in his heart to pray before thee. And now Lord, thou art that God that hast promised this goodnesse to thy servant, now therefore let it please thee to bless the house (i.e. the family and posterity) *of thy Servant, that it may be before thee for ever; for thou blessest O Lord and it shall be blessed for ever.* So it is a wonderfull encouragement to the Children of holy men, to seek unto the Lord for grace and Salvation for themselves. The child of a godly man may come before the Lord, and say, Lord thou hast promised to bestow grace, and give eternal blessings unto those that are the children of such as fear thy name, my Father, my Mother thou knoweſt did fear thy name, why then may not that promise belong to me?

4. *The children of godly parents are the subjects of much faithfull prayer.* David prayed earnestly for his Son Solomon, 1 Chron. 29.19. & 22.16. So did Isaac for his son Jacob. Gen. 28.1, 3, 4. Now it is matter of great encouragement, that prayer is going: especially the prayers of godly parents will doe much in order to obtaining mercy for their children. For they have a great natural affection toward their children, which when it is sanctified, maketh them to be the more earnest with the Lord for them. If a Child were to ask prayers for his life, let him desire the prayers of his Father, if his Father be indeed one that hath an Interest in Heaven. It is said in the fifth Commandment, *Honour thy Father, and thy Mother, that thy dayes may be long upon the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*, Exod 20.12. because as for dutiful Children, their Parents are engaged to pray much for them, and by that means do lengthen out their dayes. In the Hebrew it is, *they shall prolong thy dayes, h. e.* thy Father and thy Mother shall do it. How

How should they do it? [b] even by praying for their Posterity, and blessing them in the Name of the Lord, and by that means prolonging their dayes not only upon the Earth, but to Eternity in Heaven, of which that Land of Canaan was a Type. The prayers of godly Parents have a great influence and Interest in obtaining blessings temporal, spiritual, and eternal for their Children. Abrahams prayers for Ishmael prevailed farr, and his prayers for Isaac prevailed further. *Abraham said unto God, O that Ismael might live before thee, and God said, as for Ismael I have heard thee, behold I have blessed him, but my Covenant will I establish with Isaac*, especially if Parents pray in faith. As sometimes a father hath a particular Faith for such a Child. As to those that have much communion with God, and know much of his mind, many times it is so, that a believing Parent can say, as for such a Child I know he shall be blessed and made a blessing. I have surely prevailed with God for him. As Isaac said of Jacob, Gen. 27. 33. *I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed*, so a godly Parent can sometimes say, such a Child of mine, Christ hath blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed for ever. Now this is a great encouragement to Children, that Prayer and Faith hath been acting for them. Yea, that a Stock of prayers hath been laid up for them. Is it not a great encouragement unto a Child, when he can say, my gracious Father hath carried my Name before God in secret many a thousand time, even every day and night since I was born into the world? certainly these prayers shall not fall to the ground.

[b] *See Dr. Owen on Ps.* 130 p. 218.

5. *Such Children have blessed Examples set before them.* Now that's a great advantage. That wise Heathen could say, *plus vivitur exemplis quam praeceptis*. Examples will do more then precepts, upon young *Seneca*,

young ones especially. A Father that walketh with God may say to his Children as Paul to the Corinthians, unto whom he was a spiritual Father, 1 Cor. 4.15,16. *In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel, wherefore I beseech you be you followers of me.* And again, Chap. 11.1. *Be you followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* So may a Father that walketh before God as he ought to do, say to his Children, observe my Example, and follow me as I follow Christ. Or as the same Apostle said to Timothy *thou hast known my Doctrine and manner of life*, 2 Tim. 3.10. Timothy was intimate with Paul, and therefore doubtless knew more of his secret way of walking and Communion with God, then was known or imagined by the World, so do Children observe more of their Parents holy course of life, then others do, which is no small advantage. A Child is witness of his Fathers Zeal, Faith, Patience; he seeth that his Father is conscientious and holy, and much in prayer to God. Now what an advantage is this? He needs not go farr to see how he ought to walk and please God, for he seeth it before his eyes every day, by the Example and Copy his Father sets before him. Moreover, it is a great encouragement unto the Child of a godly Parent, when he can think and say, my Father did serve God and the Lord accepted of him, therefore if I serve God, he will accept of me. My Father did repent and believe, and walk in the way of holiness, God blessed him and his Family; therefore if I walk in the steps of my Fathers faith and obedience, *the God of my Father* will bless me and mine for ever.

6. *The Children of wicked men fall under heavy curses and Threatnings*; therefore they are godly mens Children unto whom peculiar encouragements to seek the Lord do appertain; As for wicked transgressors

greſſors they are curſed not only in their perſons but in their poſterity, even curſed in the fruit of their body, Deut. 28.15. *The houſe (i.e.* Children) *of the wicked ſhall be overthrown*, Prov. 14.11. *The Seed of evil doers ſhall never be renowned, prepare ſlaughter for his Children, for the iniquity of his Fathers*, Iſai. 14.20,21. It is true, that if a Child do unfeignedly repent and turn to God, though his Parents ſhould have been never ſo wicked, God will accept of him; The repenting Son ſhall not be damned meerly for his Fathers iniquity, *Ezek.* 18.14. But it is more rare for ſuch Children ever to repent; and if they do not repent they ſhall be puniſhed for their Fathers and Mothers ſins as well as for their own, becauſe they juſtify them by doing like them. How many Examples are there recorded in the Scripture of Gods puniſhing Children with their Parents and becauſe of their ſin? So Achans Children, and Dathan's and Abiram's; yea, millions of Children that were drowned and damned with their curſed Parents in Noahs flood; and when Sodom and Gomorrah was deſtroyed, not only the Parents, but the Children periſhed, and now ſuffer together the vengeance of Eternal fire; and was not an expreſs charge given concerning the little ones of the Amalekites, Midianites, &c. that they ſhould be deſtroyed with their Fathers? thus doth the Lord recompence the iniquity of the Fathers into the boſome of the Children.

7. *We find in the Scripture that the Children of holy men have been encouraged from this conſideration, that they were ſo related to ſuch as had a ſpecial Intereſt in God.*—So Jacob, Gen. 31.5. *The God of my Father hath been with me*, and *ver.* 42. *except the God of my Father and fear of Iſaac had been with me*, and *Chap.* 32. 9. *Jacob ſaid, O God of my Father Abraham, and God of*

of my Father Iſaac. He was greatly encouraged in looking up to God from that very conſideration, that the Lord was the God of his Father, and God of his Grand-Father. So Moſes, *Exod.* 18.4. *The God of my Father was my help, and delivered me from the Sword of Pharaoh*, and David, *Pſal.* 116.16, *O Lord truly I am thy Servant; I am thy Servant, the Son of thy Handmaid.* Inaſmuch as his mother was a pretious godly woman, he was encouraged to plead his Intereſt in God. So Solomon; 1 King. 8.57. *The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our Fathers, let him not leave us nor forſake us.* Inaſmuch as the Lord was their fathers God, Solomon and the Lords people with him had their hearts drawn forth to hope that he would be their God alſo, ſo as never to forſake them. And Daniels heart was enlarged in giving praiſes to God ſince he could ſay, *I thank thee O thou God of my Fathers who haſt given me wiſdome.* Dan. 2.23.

Theſe things then make it evident that ſuch children are under peculiar encouragement to ſeek the Lord.

USE. 1. *Hence it is a great mercy to be born and brought up under godly Parents.* Though ſome make a light matter of it, like Eſau that ſaid, what good ſhall this birth-right doe me, he deſpiſed his birth-right; but the things mentioned make it appear to be a mercy indeed. To be under the wing of the Covenant, though but as to the external diſpenſation of it, is in it ſelf a mercy. To have the means of grace vouchſafed, (which is ever wont to follow upon a covenant intereſt in God) is mercy: Wherefore the Apoſtle having propounded that Queſtion, *What advantage hath the Jew above the Gentile?* maketh Anſwer, *much every way, chiefly in that to them is committed the Oracles of God.* Rom. 3.2. Next unto Chriſt and the Spirit of grace, the bleſſed Bible is the great

See Dr. Tuckney on Phil. 3 8. *p.* 66, 67, 68.

greatest gift that ever was bestowed on the world; now this the children of godly Parents are wont to enjoy; Timothy being descended from a godly mother and grand-mother, even from a child knew the Scriptures, 2. Tim. 3. 15. To enjoy the word and Ordinances of God publickly dispensed is a great mercy; it is therefore mentioned as such a blessing as is enough to make amends for many sorrows and afflictions, *Thine eyes shall behold thy Teachers*, Isai. 30 20. This is wont to be the portion of godly mens Children. And to have the benefit of private instructions, admonitions, exhortations is a great mercy; Solomon confesseth that his Father and his mother taught him good doctrine: Prov. 4. 2. It was good because for his everlasting benefit and advantage. Nor are the children of godly men without this benefit, Psal. 34. 11. *Come you children hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* It is a great mercy to be taught and principled in the fear of God, and that betimes; to be told of the evil of sin, the infinite danger of dying in a natural unconverted estate, the necessity of obtaining an interest in Christ, and to be directed in the right way to Salvation. Also to be the subjects of much prayer is great mercy; it is mentioned concerning Solomon as a special favour God would vouchsafe to him, Psal. 72. 15. *Prayer shall be made for him continually.* Thus concerning the children of the Lords people, the publick prayers of the Church reach them, and their godly parents are daily praying for them; so that prayer is made for them continually. Moreover, such children experience outward blessings and preservations for their parents sake. It is said concerning him that feareth God, *His children shall find a place of Refuge*, Prov. 14. 26. And the Lord said to Abraham concerning Ishmael, *Gen.* 27. 13.

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seh,
Ben. Israel
Concil.
p. 43. in
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21.13. *I will make a nation of him because he is thy seed.* And God spared Solomon for his Father David's sake,— 1 *King*.11.34. And as for Jehoram all his Children were destroyed save one, and that one had been cut off too, had it not been for the respect which the Lord did bear to his blessed fore-Father. 1 *King*.8.19. Yea, and such Children have a greater blessing with that outward state which God in his Providence shall see meet to cast upon them, then the Children of wicked men usually have; Though it may be they have not so much of the World as some others, yet since what they have was gotten in a way of righteousness, a blessing cometh along with it; for this cause David saith, *A little that a righteous man hath is better then the riches of many wicked.* Psal.37.16.

USE. 2. *Hence we ought to nourish hope concerning such Children, and that above what can be said with respect unto the Children of other Parents.* But some one may object and say, have not good men bad Children, godly men ungodly Children? how then is there ground of hope with respect unto such Children in peculiar wise? Answ. This is sadly true sometimes; the most high to shew the Soveraignty of his grace, sometimes chuseth some of the Children of a wicked Parent, and refuseth some of a godly Parent; Also to shew that it is not in the power of men to give grace, no not in the power of godly men, so much as to their own Children; sometimes such Children prove very unlike unto their godly Parents. It was therefore said to Samuel, *thy Sons do not walk in thy wayes*, 1 Sam.8.5. And that prophane *Jehojakim* how unlike was he to his blessed Father *Josiah*? It is noted concerning Josiah, that when the word of God was read to him, he rent his Clothes, humbled himself, and was afraid of the

Lords

Lords holy displeasure; but *Jehojakim after three or four leaves were read, he took his pen knife, and cut the Roll in pieces, and burnt it in the fire, he was not afraid, nor rent his garments.* Jer.36.23,24. Yet this is further to be added and considered, that when the Children of good men are unlike their Parents in grace and holiness, it proceeds not from any unfaithfulness in the blessed God as to his Covenant with such Parents, or with their Children, for

1. Vsually it is some evill in such parents (though otherwise godly) which the Lord doth punish in their children, Either they are not so diligent in teaching and instructing them as they ought to be; If we must judge all those parents ungodly whose children are miserably instructed, I am certain that many amongst us, who have a name to live, and would be thought to have the root of the matter in them, will be found amongst the ungodly. Or Parents are sinfully indulgent towards their children; so was Eli; indeed he instructed them, told them of the evil of those wayes they walked in, and exhorted them to reform, but he corrected and restrained them not; Isaac was too indulgent towards his profane Esau; so was David towards Absolom, that afterwards proved a Rebel, rising up in arms against his own Father; and he did sinfully indulge Adonijah; the Scripture taketh notice of it, that *his Father had not displeased him at any time in saying why hast thou done so?* 1 King.1.6. No wonder he came to such an unhappy end, for usually such children are first or last a shame to the Father that begat them, and bitterness to the mother that bare them. Or it may be parents doe not pray and believe for their children as they ought to doe: God in this case sometimes saith unto parents, according to your faith be it done unto you. If you pray much, and

believe much for your children, you shall obtain much mercy from the Lord for them. Psal. 33. last.

2 Many times the children of godly men are like their parents. In some godly Familyes all the children of the family are made partakers of converting saving grace. So in Jacobs Family; there is reason to believe that his twelve sons did repent before they died, and that they are now in heaven, considering that they were Types of the Elect of God, and their names were written upon the breast of the high priest, when he entred into the Holy of Holyes. So concerning Jobs children; the Scripture saith, that after the death of his children and the loss of his estate, the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before, yet he had but ten children after that, which was the number he had before, wherefore Interpreters probably conclude that his other children were not lost; they might all goe to heaven notwithstanding the sad and sudden death which befel them. And experience confirmeth the truth of this, we see that in some families God is pleased to bestow converting grace upon all the children therein; especially if their parents be very much in prayer to God for them. I remember I once heard an holy praying man say, my father had six children, and they are all either with Christ, or in Christ; and he hath given me six children, three of them are already with Christ, and the other (I bless his name) are in Christ. And I have read [c] of one who held much communion with God, that once said to an intimate friend, *I have this day obtained mercy from God not only for my self, but for all mine*, and evident signs of regenerating grace did afterwards appear in all his Children.

[c] *v. Full filling of Scriptures* p. 442.

3. God is wont to remember and establish his covenant with some of the children of his Servants

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however; if not to all, yet with some of them. It is commonly seen that as for wicked Parents though they have many Children they are all ungodly like their Parents; but it is seldome known that if a godly man hath many Children that they all prove wicked; first or last God converts some of them. If there be an Ishmael in Abrahams Family, there is also an Isaac; if there be an Esau in Isaac's Family, there is also a Jacob; if there be an Absolom in Davids Family, there is also a Solomon; nor ought we to doubt, but that Nathan and many more of Davids Children are now in Heaven, albeit three of them perished.

4. If the Lord cast off the immediate Seed, he remembers his Covenant to others that are more remote. Esau was hated, yet it is conceived by learned men that *Job* and his godly friends were of Isaacs posterity by *Esau*. *Samuels* son *Joel* was not like his Father, but his grand-child *Heman* was an excellent Prophet like his blessed grand-Father; yea, and many of Samuels great grand-Children, were faithful Ministers in the house of God, 1 Chron. 6. 33. and 25. 5, 6. The Lord hath sometimes cast off a few generations, and yet at last remembers his Covenant made with blessed Ancestors; Jer. 31. 17. *There is hope in thine end,* (h. e. as to after generations there is hope) *saith the Lord, that thy Children shall come again to their own border.* There is then cause to nourish hope concerning such Children; there is so with respect to succeeding generations in *New-England*; Albeit there is doleful degeneracy appearing in the face of this generation, and no man can say, but that ~~the body of~~ the present generation will perish both temporally and eternally, yet there are some that the Lord will remember his Covenant with, even a remnant according to Election that shall be saved,

[d] *Voetius disp. de Gentilismo.* p. 603

a considerable part of

We may say of New-Englands Children (many of them) as the Apostle speaketh concerning the Jews, however the case may be with them at the present, *they are beloved for their Fathers sake*, Rom. 11.28.

Use 3. *Hence Parents should be careful how they approve themselves for their poor Childrens* (as well as for their own) sake. There are especially three things that Parents should be careful about for their Childrens sake.

1. That they be in a state of grace themselves; that they have a special and saving Interest in God. As David said to his son Solomon, 1 Chron. 28. 20. *The Lord God, even my God will be with thee*; So if you can, upon good grounds say, *the Lord is my God*, you may the better hope that he will be with your Children. If you be indeed righteous in the sight of God, it will be your poor Childrens advantage; Psal. 37. 25. *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his Seed begging bread.* But if you be unconverted, and Christless, what a case are your Children in? That if they be in any distress, they have a Father that cannot pray for them, or if he do, his prayers find no acceptance with God, because they proceed from one that hath not an interest in Heaven; Remember that Scripture, Deut. 5. 29. *O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my Commandments always, that it might be well with them, & with their Children for ever*; plainly intimating that if Parents truly fear God, their children shall fare the better for it; Yea, let me tell you, that even if any of them dye in their Infancyes, [e] you need not doubt of their Salvation, Deut. 30. 19. *That both thy Seed shall live.* God having taken your Children into a Covenant of life, if they never break that Covenant, shall they not live for ever? yea, they shall live for ever.

[e] *See Mr Whiston's primitive practice of Infant Baptisme.*

2. Parents

2. Parents should be careful what opinions they embrace. For oftentimes the poison of a corrupt opinion in the Father proveth baneful to the Child; As Naamans Leprosy went down from Generation to Generation, so the plague of spiritual Leprosy in the Head, is sometimes propagated from the Father to the Son.

3. Parents should be careful of their conversation; because their Children are apt to follow their Example, especially in that which is evil. As it's noted of Ahaziah, that he walked in the way of his Father and of his Mother, 1 King. 22. 52. And of those superstitious persons, 2 King. 17. 41. *They served their graven Images, both their Children, and their Childrens Children; as did their Fathers, so do they, to this day.* If the Father follow superstitions or prophane practices, it is most likely that the Children will do so too; Therefore you that are Parents, in the fear of God look to it, that you do not scandalize your Children by an evil Example; If your Children see you in drink sometimes, will not they be drunkards too? If they hear you swear, will not they swear also? if they see you careless in the observation of the Sabbath, will not they likewise be guilty of Sabbath-breaking? And if they see you live in the neglect of holy duties, no prayer in the Family, how shall they be seekers of God? It will be a wonder if such Children do not prove Athiests, that are brought up in Familyes, where they never see any prayer, or acknowledgement of God. O think with your selves, if you that are Parents should any of you perish, and your miserable Children follow you to hell, how will they curse you there? If thy Children perish through thy evil Example, they will follow thee up and down in the ever burning Lake, crying out, Woe to us, that ever we were born of such Parents!

[f] *See Mr. Bolton of walking with God.* p. 249.

Parents, (*Fathers* and *Grand-Fathers*) as have been eminent for God in their time, eminent for holiness, yea and for sufferings, on the account of bearing witness to the Name and Truth of Christ. Now a special blessing is wont to follow the children of such as have been sufferers for Christ. Our Fathers were some of them eminent Confessors, and in a degree, *Martyrs of Jesus*, who left a pleasant Land, and Fathers houses to follow the Lord into a wilderness, in a land which was not sown. Yea and they came hither, partly with respect unto their Off-spring, that they might leave their Children under the special blessing of God in Christ Jesus. Hath not the Lord peculiar blessings in store for such Children? let us pray them down from heaven above.

Consider, 4. *What a blessed thing it will be, if we prevail in heaven for this mercy.* We cannot pray for a more desirable thing then this blessing! [f] It will help all that is amiss among us. If the Lord pour his Spirit on the body of the present rising Generation, so as to begin a work of Conversion in those that are as yet strangers to the power of godliness, and to carry on that work by renewed conversions in the hearts of his people, that will save us from those Judgments which otherwise there is no hope that we shall escape them. *Ezek.* 39.29. *neither will I hide my face any more from them*: Why? *For I have poured out my Spirit* saith the Lord God. And doe we not desire the Eternal as well as the Temporal prosperity of our Children? If the Lord pour his Spirit upon them, it shall goe well with them, and that for ever. *Deut.* 5.29. You are thoughtfull what will become of your Children after you are gone out of the world. If you can but pray grace into their souls, they shall doe well enough. As that godly learned *Claviger* would sometimes express [k] it (saith he) I may see the

[f] *vr. Mr Samuel Hooker's Sermon on Hos.* 10.12.

[k] *lege Clavigeri Vitam.*

the fear of God in my Children, *Satis mihi, satis filiis, & filiabus prospexi*, I have then portion enough for my Sons, and for my daughters: they are then sure never to want any good thing as long as they shall live. If the Lord pour his Spirit upon our Children, then shall we have joy in them indeed. No greater joy then that, 3 John 3,4. Prov. 23,24,25. *The Father of the Righteous shall greatly rejoyce, and he that begets a wise,* (i. e. godly) *Child shall have joy of him: thy Father and thy Mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.* We shall bless God to Eternity, that ever we had such Children: for it will adde to the Glory of Parents at the great Day, when they shall behold not themselves alone, but their Off-spring with them partakers of Eternal life and happiness, and withal see and know that their Prayers have had an influence towards the obtaining of all that mercy. We shall meet these Prayers again with exceeding joy *in that day*. And in the mean time, our Children, if we can pray down the Spirit of the Lord upon them, will continue to pray for us, whilst we are with them in the World. O what a blessed thing is that, for a man to have the Children that came out of his own bowels, praying for him continually? A worthy Minister of Christ once said, *I had rather have my house filled with my Childrens Prayers, then to have my house filled with Gold.*

A few things by way of Direction,

1. *Let Parents be sure that they be converted themselves* Deut. 30.6. *I will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy Seed.* If our own hearts be circumcised, we may pray in Faith that the Lord will circumcise the hearts of our Children, otherwise we cannot do it. Parents that have not grace themselves, are not fit to pray for grace to be poured on their Children; nor indeed can they do it; for the spirit of supplication is the

spirit of grace, *Zech.*12.10. Nor can they believe for them. An Hypocrite, or unconverted man cannot act Faith for his Childs soul, who never yet did believe for his own soul. Nor doth this promise in the text belong to other then godly Parents, *Ps.*128.4. *Behold that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.*

2. *Parents be exemplary.* Walk before God in your houses with a perfect heart. Let us be careful in our Families, to walk so that our Children may see by our examples, how they ought to walk and please God, that if they will but be and do like to their Parents, they shall certainly be blessed for ever. There are many of the Elect of God, that the special means of their Conversion hath been the holy Example of their Parents. Many a chosen Vessel, that when he hath beheld his Fathers love to Christ, and faithfulness to the interest of God, Zeal, Patience, Holiness, that hath been a special means of Conviction and Conversion. You know what *Elijah* said to *Elisha*, [1] when he desired that he might have (*b. e.* comparatively to what the rest of the Sons of the Prophets had) a double portion of *Elijahs* spirit, He said, *Thou hast asked an hard thing, nevertheless if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee, but if not, it shall not be so*, 2 King.2,10. Even so if your Children see you holy and faithful to the interest of God, and of Jesus Christ, and every way exemplary, doubt not of it, but in Gods time, they shall receive of your Spirit. As on the other hand, there is nothing more fatally destructive and ruining to the Souls of Children, then a bad example in Parents, specially if they be such as pretend to Religion: when *Cham* did but one time see his Father in drink, it brought a fearful curse upon him, and upon his Posterity to this day. There are great complaints (and too great cause) concerning *the Rising Generation in New-England*

[1] *See my Brothers Sermons on 1 King* 8.57.p22

land; whereas the fault is very much in Parents, in that they are no more exemplary: Your Children take notice of your Pride, your Sensuality, your Worldliness, your unmortified Passions, and that doth woefully scandalize, and harden them against the blessed wayes of Christ. O be careful to walk so, as that your Children may not see their Fathers nakedness.

3. *Let Parents be careful to instruct their Children in the fear of God*: Prayer should be followed with suitable endeavours. If Parents must pray that their Children may have Grace, they must use the means whereby God is wont to convey Grace into the Souls of his Elect, *Psa.*34.11. *Come ye Children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* David did so, and *Solomon* his Son found that those Paternal Instructions, were blessed for saving good to his Soul, *Prov.*4.1,3,4. Also the Instructions of his Mother were (through the blessing of God) a means of much good unto him, *Prov.*31.1,2. Fathers and Mothers should be instilling good Principles into the minds and hearts of their Children betimes, *Eph.*6.4. *Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,* (*ektrephete*) Feed their Souls with spiritual milk as soon as they are capable of it. Tell them sadly, whilest yet they are Children, of their misery by nature, of the necessity of a new birth, instruct them about Christ, and Heaven, and Hell, and Eternity; charge them with the greatest solemnity, to know and serve the God of their Fathers, 1 *Thes.*2.11. *We charged every one of you, as a Father his Children.* It becometh a Father to charge his Children: And if Parents be faithful in discharging their duty this way, success will not be altogether wanting: If you *will* command your Children they *shall* keep the way of the Lord, *Gen.*18.19. If Parents would spend more time: and take more pains in instructing their Children,

and

and follow those Instructions, with fervent Prayers to God, he would own them therein, and we should see more young Converts, and a world of sin and sorrow would such Children be prevented and saved from.

4. *Wait on the Lord*; though the Answer doe not come presently, yet continue praying and believing and let nothing discourage you: Say not, I have prayed for my Childrens Souls, but no grace, no change wrought in them, and now I am e'ne hopeless, and faithless. Remember the woman of *Canaan*, she cried to the Lord Jesus for her poor child, & yet had repulses one after another, the Lord not seeming to regard her; this was to try her Faith: at last she had her desire granted; who knoweth but the Lord may deal so with thee? you therefore that fear God, despair not concerning your Children, though at present they may be stout hearted, and far from Righteousness. *Austin* [a] was a long time a vain, lascivious, prophane young man, but his godly Mothers Prayers and Tears did at last prevail in Heaven, that he became an eminent convert. O continue to pray hard, and believe strongly, and that Son who at present is the grief of thy mind, and maketh thy Soul to be in bitterness, God can make an *Austin* of him. And that Daughter, which (as *Jephtah* said) *hath brought thee very low, and is one of them that trouble thee*, the Lord can convert her Soul, that thy Heart and thy Reins, even thine shall rejoyce. I Remember I have somewhere read, of one that had been a very sinful creature, and desperately froward and rebellious, but her godly Parents continued praying, and entreated divers faithful Ministers of God to pray for her, and God heard them, and in Answer to prayer, rescued a forlorn Soul out of the Jaws of Satan and Hell: and when that young Woman lay upon her death bed, she said to her godly Friends

[m] *Lege Austini Confessiones. l. 3. cap. 12.*

Friends and Relations, [n] *For my ſake never deſpair of any one, let their caſe at preſent be never ſo bad and deſperate, for you know how it was with me, and yet ſee how God hath anſwered your Prayers for me.* Think of it, you Fathers and Mothers that have wept and prayed for the *Converſion* and *Salvation* of your Children full many a time, and as yet you ſee it not. Though you ſhould never ſee it; dye truſting in God, and believing that he will remember his Covenant with your Children after you, *Gen.*50.24. It was an excellent ſpirit of Faith that breathed in that [o] dying Worthy of his time, who upon his death-bed could ſay to his Children and Grand-children, *I know that you ſhall be bleſſed not only with the bleſſings of Earth, but with the bleſſings of Heaven.* Know for your encouragement, that your Prayers will live after you are dead; Prayers dipt in the blood of Chriſt, are of eternal Efficacy. When your Bodies are in the Grave, and your Souls in Heaven, your Children may remember how you inſtructed them, and prayed for them, and the remembrance of it, may then be a means of their converſion: You may hear of your childrens converſion after you are in Heaven; the Angels of God that ſee it, and that rejoyce over a ſinner that repenteth will bring you the Tydings of it; and then there will be joy all Heaven over.

[n] *See Clarks Examples vol. 2. p.360.*

[o] *Philip Mornay.*

2. Let me exhort Children that are here before the Lord this day: *O do you go home, and pray earneſtly for converting Grace.* Beg as for your lives that the God of your Fathers would pour his Spirit upon you: Young ones hearken! In the Name of the Lord I ſpeak to you; the Lord can pour his Spirit on you betimes, then ſhall you be rich in Grace, let this promiſe encourage you to look up to God through Jeſus Chriſt. Go into ſecret corners, and plead it with God; ſay, Lord thou haſt promiſed to pour thy Spirit

Spirit upon the Off-spring of thy Servants: I am (through thy grace) among the children of thy Servants, thou art the God of my Father, the God of my Grand-father, oh! be my God also. If you seek God in earnest, he will be found of you, but if you forsake him, and break his Covenant sealed in your Baptism, woe unto you. If you dye and be not first new creatures, better you had never been born: you will be left without excuse before the Lord. Terrible witnesses will rise up against you at the last day: Your godly Parents will testifie against you before the Son of God at that day: And the Ministers of Christ will also be called in as witnesses against you for your condemnation, if you dye in your Sins.

As for many of you, I have treated with you privately, and personally, I have told you, and I do tell you, and make solemn protestation before the Lord, that if you dye in a Christless, graceless Estate, I will most certainly profess unto Jesus Christ at the day of Judgement, Lord, these are the children, whom I spake often unto in thy Name, publickly and privately, and I told them, that if they did not make unto themselves a new heart, and make sure of an interest in Christ, they should become damned creatures for evermore; and yet they would not repent and believe the gospel. O why should I who can appeal to God that I long for your conversion, be your accuser before the Lord Jesus at the last day?

And you that are grown unto years of more discretion and understanding: Young Men, and young women, O be in earnest for converting grace, before it be too late. It is high time for you to look about you; deceive not your selves with false Conversions, (as many young men doe to their eternal ruine) or with gifts instead of grace, beware of out-standing the day of Grace, lest the Spirit of God de-

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part, & your souls become desolate. Death waits for you: there is now a mortal and contagious disease in many houses: the sword of the Lord is drawn and young men fall down apace slain under it; do you not see the arrows of death come flying over your heads? Why then, Awake, Awake, and turn to God in Jesus Christ whilst it is called to day, & know for certain that if you dye in your sins, you will be the most miserable of any poor creatures in the bottom of Hell. O consider of it; to be prayed, wept, preached, Fasted down to Hell, what an amazing thing will it be! Wherefore now hear, and turn, and live. As yet Christ stands and knocks at the door of your hearts; He doth so this day, and by this Sermon. O that you would hear the Lord Jesus calling to you from heaven, and saying, *Turn ye at my reproof, and I will pour out my Spirit upon you.*

TIBI DOMINE.

In the third Page of the first Epistle before the Sermon on 1 Chron. 28. 9. the seventh line, for *ten*, read *eleven*: For though it was not ten years since the death of that blessed man there mentioned, when the Epistle was first written, yet as it is now dated, 'tis almost eleven years.